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### AGENTS

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“NEWS OF THE ARMADA” — DRAKE’S INTERRUPTED MATCH ON PLYMOUTH HOE. (See p. 14.)  
(From a Drawing by Allan Stewart.)

# THE COMPLETE BOWLER

BEING THE HISTORY AND PRACTICE OF THE  
ANCIENT AND ROYAL GAME OF BOWLS

BY

JAMES A. MANSON  
("JACK HIGH")

WITH FOURTEEN FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS AND  
EIGHT DIAGRAMS IN THE TEXT

LONDON  
ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK  
1912



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## P R E F A C E

THIS book will, it is hoped, serve a twofold purpose. In the first place, it gives a connected sketch of the history of Bowls from its inception to the present day, tracing incidentally how the fine old English game, once the favourite recreation of Kings, came to be slighted as the Cinderella of pastimes, and how it was at last redeemed from its lowly and despised state.

In the second place, it explains in necessary detail—primarily, of course, for beginners, be they young or old—how the game is played, how greens are constructed and maintained, how the bowl is made, and what are its peculiarities, with much else of importance on the practical side of the pastime. In this section I am well served by an intimate knowledge of and love for the game, which I have sedulously cultivated since 1869, when I rolled my first bowl on the green in East Princes Street Gardens, Edinburgh.

During this long interval I have witnessed

a veritable revolution in Bowls in the South of England. Soon after I came to London, in 1870—when my Mentor was the late James Penman, once a member of Luton Place B.C.,—there was only one really unexceptionable private green in the whole Metropolis. To-day there is a score at least, and this number is being added to rapidly. What is true of London applies, with even greater point, to the Midlands, the Home Counties, and the South-West, to say nothing of Ireland and Wales, the Commonwealth and the Dominions. Moreover, it is at least equally significant that the London County Council, and many municipalities and rural authorities have laid down public greens, several of admirable quality, in the parks and open spaces under their control. In fact, the revival of interest in Bowls is not a whit less remarkable or less widespread than the popularity which happily overtook Golf some years ago.

In these circumstances it is not surprising that a demand has sprung up on all sides for a text-book on the game. The present work has occupied me for some time. At the suggestion of my old friend, Mr. William Senior, when he was Editor of *The Field*, I was induced to examine the scattered members — *maxime disjecta* — of Bowls history and literature, and my research has been lightened



by the co-operation of troops of friends who kindly favoured me with all sorts of materials. I have been especially indebted to Mr. Andrew H. Hamilton, S.S.C., of Edinburgh; Mr. Thomas Baines, of Streatham; Mr. Ernest C. Price, of Brownswood B.C.; Mr. John C. Hunter, of Kilbarchan; Mr. Andrew Speir, of Kilwinning; Mr. James T. Morrison, of Coatbridge; Mr. Ezra Pickard and Mr. F. W. Lilburn, of Leicester; Mr. Edward Lanham, of Southampton; Mr. D. Rice Thomas, of Upper Edmonton; Mr. William Lindsay, of Belfast; Mr. Edward Lloyd, of Cardiff; and my brethren of the pen, Mr. John G. Grant, M.A., by whose valuable labours I have freely profited, and Mr. David W. Brown, of Bearsden. I have also been greatly favoured by specific services, most generously rendered, by Mr. C. M. Collingwood, of Exeter B.C.; Major J. J. Murphy, of Mansfield B.C., London; Mr. William Penman, of Upper Thames Street, London, and other brother-Bowlers. For facts in connection with the recent history of Bowls and other matters, I have drawn upon articles contributed to *The Field*, as well as my *Bowler's Handbook*. With wonted kindness, my esteemed friend, Mr. Arthur Bryant, of Carshalton, compiled the index, and my son, Mr. Magnus M. Manson, prepared the diagrams.

Though an avowed enthusiast, I do not pretend that Bowls has attained to perfection. No pastime is beyond the reach of improvement, and accordingly I have not hesitated to discuss certain features of the game which are, at the least, open to criticism. Nevertheless, I willingly admit that, unless and until Bowlers generally endorse these views on reform—which, in the last resort, must come from within and not from without,—the authority of the Scottish code of laws must be paramount.

Every Bowler is animated by the wish to promote the best interests of the game, and to foster that spirit of comradeship which should prevail on every green, and permeate every club. Heartily sympathising with such aims I have endeavoured to develop and strengthen them in this book.

May the Bowler's foot never gang weary, or the eye grow dim, that follows the biassed bowl as it courses up the green! And may the last shot of all find every one of us up to the Mark!

JAMES A. MANSON.

THE SAVAGE CLUB, LONDON.

# CONTENTS

## PART I HISTORY

### CHAPTER I

#### BIRTH AND BANNING OF BOWLS

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | PAGE |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| The Cradle of Bowls—Antiquity of the Game—Oldest Green in the World—Knights of Southampton—Parliaments in a Panic—Bowls Illegal until 1845—Bowling Alleys—A Pothouse Recreation—Gosson's Protest—Bowls Condemned by Ascham, Approved by Bacon—Drake's Game on Plymouth Hoe—Shakspeare a Bowler—Historical Value of his Allusions | 3    |

### CHAPTER II

#### THE DARK AGE OF BOWLS

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| James I.'s "Declaration"—Sunday Play—Sir John Suckling's Gambling—Charles I. as a Bowler—Earle's Description of a Green—Quarles's "Emblem"— Evelyn's Match at Durdans — The Green at the Spring Garden—Peccadillo Hall—The Greens in Marylebone—Bowling Green House, Putney—The "Bowling Green," Blackheath—Pepys's Allusions—The Seamy Side— <i>The Compleat Gamester</i> —Sir Isaac Newton's Penalty—Swift's Comical Blunder—Bowls in <i>The Spectator</i> —John Metcalf's Prowess—Celebrated Lovers of the Game— |  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|

|                                                                                                   | PAGE |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| The Silence of Charles Lamb—References in <i>Aurora Leigh</i> —The Curse and the Blight . . . . . | 19   |

## CHAPTER III

## THE SAVING OF THE GAME

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| The Debt to Scotland—Earliest Notice of the Game—Candleriggs Green, Glasgow—The Willowbank Club—Tamson's Green in Edinburgh—Lutton Place Green—A Fairy Ring—The Edinburgh Club—Argyll's Wraith—Bicket's Green, Kilmarnock—W. W. Mitchell's 'Prenticeship—"Borrowing" and "Paying" Bowls—The Game Scarcely Mentioned by Burns—How Mitchell Became a Law-maker—The 13th Earl of Eglinton—Glasgow <i>versus</i> Ayrshire—A Mammoth Object-Lesson—Winners of the Eglinton Cup . . . . . | 38 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|

## CHAPTER IV

## THE RULING ELDERS

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| James Brown, of Sanquhar—Founding of the Scottish B.A.—Revision of the Laws—Andrew H. Hamilton—The London and Southern Counties B.A.—Ernest C. Price—The Midland Counties B.A.—Bowlers of the Border—John Young and Charles Wood—The Imperial B.A.—The Australia Cup—The new English B.A.—Old Style Clubs, Archaic Codes, and Poor Greens—The Irish B.A.—John C. Hunter—The Welsh B.A. . . . . | 50 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|

## CHAPTER V

## "ADVANCE, AUSTRALIA!"

|                                                                                               |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Bowls in Greater Britain—The New South Wales B.A. and Victoria B.A.—Where Australian Practice |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|



# CONTENTS

xi

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | PAGE |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| Differs from the Scottish—Inter-State Matches—<br>Visit of the Australian Team to the Mother Country<br>in 1901—Match with the Brownwood B.C.—<br>Colonial fondness for Legality—"Baby" Jacks—<br>Driving Skips and their Risks—Colonial Opinion<br>of British Greens—Scottish Customs Considered—<br>Charles Wood's Luck—Australian Greens—The<br>Danger Ahead . . . . . | 64   |

## CHAPTER VI

### "THE MAPLE LEAF FOR EVER!"

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| Bowls in Nova Scotia—The Duke of Kent's Green—The<br>Ontario Associations—Peculiarities of the Canadian<br>Code—The Canadian Handicap—Play by Electric<br>Light—Westmount Green, Montreal—Canadians<br>in the Mother Country, 1904—Address—Albums—<br>A Team of Trojans Visits Canada, 1906—Canadians<br>again Challenge the United Kingdom—Their Tour<br>in 1908—Dr. J. W. Edgar's Skipping—The British<br>Team of 1910—Advantages of the Tours in Both<br>Worlds . . . . . | 74 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|

## CHAPTER VII

### THE INTERNATIONALS

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| The Question of Nationality—The Scot Abroad—The<br>Whole-Rink Theory—Present Mode of Selection—<br>Educational Value of the Matches—The Campaign<br>of 1908—Telford as <i>Beau Sabreur</i> —George Snedden's<br>Wonderful Game at Cardiff in 1909—The Belfast<br>Meeting in 1910—Carruthers <i>versus</i> Macmillan—<br>Dr. Robson Pulverises the Midlanders—England<br>on Top in 1911—Scotland's <i>Débâcle</i> —Wales's Fine<br>Form—Ireland's Hard Luck—The White Shoe<br>Nuisance—Objectionable Chaff—Childish Hilarity—<br>Results of the Matches from 1903 to 1911 . . . . . | 88 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|

## CHAPTER VIII

## "LOOSE ENDS"

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | PAGE |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| THE GAME IN "FOREIGN PARTS"— <i>Boulingrin</i> and <i>Boule-<br/>vard</i> —Charles Berjeau's Conjecture—Evelyn in the<br>Luxembourg Gardens—Dickens's Pictures from<br>Genoa and Avignon—In Provence—Frank Gillett's<br>Sketches—Among the Bretons—At a Discount in<br>the Fatherland—Teniers the Younger's Picture—<br>In the United States—The Ubiquitous Scot—The<br>Kimberley Green—MUNICIPAL GREENS—Edinburgh<br>Experience and Practice—Abuse of Public Greens<br>—RECORDS—Sixteen "Up" in Two Ends—Eight in<br>One End at Reading—Ernest C. Price's Experiences<br>—A Double Tie—A Love Game . . . . . | 105  |

## PART II

## PRACTICE

## CHAPTER IX

## THE WEARING OF THE GREEN

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Bowls as a Christmas Sport—A Contractor Essential—<br>The Ideal Green—The Ditchboard Inquiry—Solway<br>Turf—Drawbacks of Small Greens—Weeds—The<br>Kew Lawns — Worms — Darwin's View — Daniel<br>Leslie's Treatment—Climate and Greens—Scythe,<br>Lawn-mower, and Roller—"Tricky" Greens—How<br>Bias may be Nullified—The Old English Bowl—<br>The Crown-Green Game—The Groundman—One<br>Green One Man—The Greenkeeper in Winter—<br>Tippling, Tipping, and Tobacco—The Ranger, or<br>Green Rota—Loan of Rinks, or Green—The Golden<br>Rule . . . . . | 129 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|

# CONTENTS

xiii

## CHAPTER X

### THE FLOWING BOWL

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | PAGE |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| "Bools and the Man"—The Stone Age—The Age of Wood—Excelite—What is a Bowl?—What is Bias?—Loading with Lead—Messrs. Barclay & Perkins's Tudor Bowls— <i>Lignum Vitæ</i> —The Making of a Bowl—The Turner's Art—The "Eyes," or Ivories—The Testing-Room—Varnished—Veining of the Wood—Weight of the Bowls—Bowls in Ronuk—Too Narrow Bias—The English B.A. and Bias—What is a Standard Bowl's Bias?—The Proper Bias—Undersized Bowls . . . . . | 152  |

## CHAPTER XI

### THE RUDIMENTS

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| BUYING BOWLS—SWEAR WORDS—THROWING THE JACK—Winning the Toss—Defects of the Scots Law—The English Practice—That an Unstraightened Jack is Playable—Various Names for the Jack—BIAS IN ACTION—Forehand and Backhand Play—"Visualise the Track of your Bowl!"—Wrong Bias—Cultivate Play on Both Hands—STYLE AND ATTITUDE—Different Attitudes Considered—DELIVERING THE BOWL—Throwing and Dumping—The Right Mode of Delivery—Playing on a Soft Green—How to Hold the Bowl—"Be Up!" and "Take Green!" | 162 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|

## CHAPTER XII

### THE RINK GAME

|                                                                                                                                                                                  |  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| The Word "Rink"—The Quartet of Players—He Who Must be Obeyed—Discipline and Combination—THE LEADER—THE SECOND PLAYER—Card of the Match—THE THIRD MAN—THE SKIP—Knowledge of Human |  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Nature—The Unsuitable Man—"What Do you See?"—Discreet Praise of his Men—The Noisy Skip—The Policy of Firing—Carrying the Jack—The Question of Guarding—Watch the Measure—Win Well and Lose Well—"Touchers"—Spat upon <i>Honoris Causa</i> —"Ditchers"—The "Live Jack"—The English Practice Preferable—The Captain | PAGE<br>187 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|

## CHAPTER XIII

## THE POINTS GAME AND FIXED JACK

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Playing with the Head—Infinite Variety in Bowls—THE GAME OF POINTS—Preparation of the Green—Rules of the Competition—DRAWING—Disposition of the Plan—GUARDING—Arranging the Ground—TRAILING—The Prepared Green—DRIVING—To Encourage Proficiency in Drawing—FIXED JACK—Plan of the Green—Duties of the Starter—The Marker and the Score—The Carried Jack—Line Bowls—Method of Play | 206 |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|

## CHAPTER XIV

## THE LAWS OF BOWLS

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| The Seventeen Laws of the Game—I. Rinks, or Divisions of the Green—II. Bowls: Size and Bias—III. Size of the Jack—IV. Conditions of a Game—V. Rink, or Team of Players—VI. Skips, or Drivers—VII. The Cloth, or Mat—VIII. Throwing the Jack—IX. Movement of the Jack and of Bowls—X. Jack, or Bowl Rebounding—XI. Jack, or Bowl Burned—XII. Touchers—XIII. Ditchers—XIV. Possession of the Rink—XV. Result of Head—XVI. Objects on the Green—XVII. Onlookers | 222 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|

|       |     |
|-------|-----|
| INDEX | 241 |
|-------|-----|



# ILLUSTRATIONS

## PLATES

PRINTED SEPARATELY

|                                                              |  |                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|--|---------------------|
| "NEWS OF THE ARMADA": DRAKE'S INTERRUPTED<br>MATCH . . . . . |  | <i>Frontispiece</i> |
|                                                              |  | FACING PAGE         |
| BOWLERS OF THE 13TH AND 14TH CENTURIES . . . . .             |  | I                   |
| GREEN OF THE SOUTHAMPTON TOWN B.C. . . . .                   |  | 16                  |
| THE DEVIL'S BOWLING GREEN . . . . .                          |  | 21                  |
| SIR JOHN VANBRUGH'S SONG,<br>"THE OXFORD BOWLERS" . . . . .  |  | 28                  |
| ANDREW H. HAMILTON, S.S.C.,<br>EDINBURGH . . . . .           |  | 49                  |
| ERNEST C. PRICE, F.C.A., BROWNSWOOD B.C. . . . .             |  | 56                  |
| ALDERMAN JOHN YOUNG, SYDNEY . . . . .                        |  | 64                  |
| GEORGE ANDERSON, PROSPECT PARK B.C.,<br>TORONTO . . . . .    |  | 81                  |
| GREEN OF THE SOUTH LONDON B.C.,<br>WANDSWORTH . . . . .      |  | 96                  |
| PROVENÇAL WORKING MEN PLAYING AT BOWLS . . . . .             |  | 113                 |
| BRETON PEASANTS PLAYING AT BOWLS . . . . .                   |  | 128                 |
| DUTCH PEASANTS PLAYING AT BOWLS . . . . .                    |  | 145                 |
| THE EAST MEADOWS BOWLING GREEN,<br>EDINBURGH . . . . .       |  | 160                 |

## DIAGRAMS

## PRINTED IN THE TEXT

|                                           | PAGE    |
|-------------------------------------------|---------|
| THE UNSTRAIGHTENED JACK . . . . .         | 171     |
| BIAS ACTING NORMALLY . . . . .            | 176     |
| WRONG BIAS . . . . .                      | 177     |
| HEAD SET FOR DRAWING . . . . .            | 209     |
| HEAD ARRANGED FOR GUARDING . . . . .      | 211     |
| HEAD PREPARED FOR TRAILING . . . . .      | 213     |
| HEAD MADE READY FOR DRIVING . . . . .     | 214     |
| FIXED JACK : GREEN SET FOR TWELVE JACKS . | 218-219 |





(After a 14th-Century MS. in the Bodleian.)



(After a 15th-Century MS. at Windsor.)



(After a 13th-Century MS.)

BOWLERS OF THE 13TH AND 14TH CENTURIES. (See pp. 5, 6.)

(From Strutt's "Sports and Pastimes of the English People," 1801)

PART I  
HISTORY





# THE COMPLETE BOWLER

## CHAPTER I

### BIRTH AND BANNING OF BOWLS

The Cradle of Bowls—Antiquity of the Game—Oldest Green in the World—Knights of Southampton—Parliaments in a Panic—Bowls Illegal until 1845—Bowling Alleys—A Pothouse Recreation—Gosson's Protest—Bowls condemned by Ascham, approved by Bacon—Drake's Game on Plymouth Hoe—Shakspere a Bowler—Historical Value of his Allusions.

LORD ROSEBERY, speaking at the dinner of the Edinburgh Burgess Golfing Society, on January 14th, 1909, said: "Sir Francis Drake was supposed to be surprised by the Armada when playing the game of Bowls, and I am inclined to think that the next Armada will find the Territorial Army playing golf. And amusement for amusement, I am not at all sure that Mr. Haldane [created Viscount Haldane of Cloan in 1911] playing at golf will not be as patriotic and delightful a spectacle as Sir Francis Drake playing Bowls." It would argue oneself a dullard to consider too

seriously opinions delivered at the festive board, for it were as futile to compare golf with Bowls as to compare curling with cricket. These are all splendid pastimes, but preference is a matter of taste, upon which it were foolish to dogmatise.

In respect of antiquity, however, Bowls is probably the oldest of outdoor games, archery alone excepted, and, what is of singular interest, London was its cradle. William Fitzstephen, who was the friend of Thomas Becket and died in or about 1190, in his biography of the great priest, furnishes by way of prologue to his work a vivid picture of the English capital. Narrating the manner in which the young lads spent their holidays he writes that, throughout summer, they took exercise "in the bow, running, leaping, and casting of stones (*jactu lapidum*)," etc.

By *jactus lapidum* Fitzstephen has been supposed to mean Bowls. Indeed, the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (9th Edition) explicitly states that "in early days stone spheres are known to have been used in Bowling, and the like thing and name were in vogue for the next two centuries, in fact till 11 Henry iv. (1409)." In my judgment this interpretation has been too hastily accepted. For though rounded stones may have been employed in a primitive stage of the game—and references

in early Acts of Parliament seem to countenance this gloss,—surely such a pastime can have possessed neither athletic skill nor scientific interest. Rather may it, more plausibly, be suggested that *jactus lapidum* was nothing but “putting the stone” (almost a literal translation of the Latin). This surmise is confirmed by Fitzstephen’s context, which shows—for he speaks also of the throwing of javelins and the wearing of bucklers “like fighting men”—that he had in view an exercise of more strenuous character than Bowls.

Nevertheless, the venerable age of Bowls may be established by other evidence. In the Royal Library at Windsor there is a MS. of the 13th century, in which a drawing delineates two players aiming at a small cone instead of the modern earthenware ball, or jack. From their gestures the players seem to take a lively interest in their game. Another 13th-century MS. contains a rough but dramatic outline-sketch that foreshadows certain features of the current pastime. Three persons occupy the green and a jack forms the mark. One player’s bowl has stopped just in front of the tee; the second has followed up *his* bowl and is represented as indulging in one of those antics suggestive of excruciating agony which some Scottish enthusiasts unconsciously affect

while their bowl is travelling jackwards, the first player meanwhile expressively waving his hand, as if bidding the approaching bowl pause in its career and not dislodge his shot; the third figure is about to deliver his bowl. A curiously elementary version of the game is exemplified in a pictorial rendering in a 14th-century MS. Book of Prayers in the Douce collection in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. Two persons are supposed to be playing, but they do not bowl to any tee. Joseph Strutt imagined the second player used the first player's bowl as the mark, though in such case what was the latter's target the antiquary was apparently at a loss to surmise. According to these three earliest extant pictures of the game, each player employed one bowl only and adopted an attitude as unconventional five or six hundred years ago as in this year of grace. In the first the Bowler is represented kneeling, in the second he may be said to stoop, in the third he stands nearly upright. Similar positions may be observed on any green in the world to-day.

But proof that Bowls is an ancient pastime is not solely documentary, for the green of the Southampton Town Bowling Club was laid down towards the end of the reign of Edward I., before 1299, and tradition avows

that it has been bowled over continuously ever since. In virtue of its claims of long descent, the Club has adopted an agreeably old-fashioned custom. The members dub their President "Master" and their chief medallist "Knight." The struggle for this latter honour provokes keen rivalry. At the close of play the winner kneels before the Master, who performs the accolade by hanging the medal bedecked with ribbons around the victor's neck, and then exclaiming, "Rise, Sir —, Knight of the Southampton Bowling Green." Thereupon the new Knight invites the company to drink champagne with him. At the annual dinner every Knight who has omitted to bring his medal is fined a bottle of wine. During play on the green the Knights are always addressed as such. A match is held annually between Knights and non-Knights, which the former, as their prowess would lead us to expect, generally win. On September 2nd, 1870, however, the fates were against them, as they were also against Napoleon III., and Mr. Edward Lanham, who helped to beat the beknighted Bowlers, tells me that, for several years, the mnemonic ran, "Fall of Sedan, Fall of the Knights." Several old medals, bequeathed or presented to the Club, are exhibited on special occasions. They are all marked, "Win it and Wear it."



From its very inception Bowls was taken up by the people, and King after King frowned upon the game as likely to seduce men from the practice of archery, then deemed the chief guarantee of England's integrity and safety. Earlier statutes proving powerless to check the popularity of the pastime, legislation ultimately assumed a vindictive aspect. In a statute of 1388 (12 Richard II.) Bowls (*gettire de pere*), along with other games, was prohibited as "unlawful." Twenty-one years later another statute (11 Henry IV.) enacted that "he that playeth at unlawful Games . . . shall be six days imprisoned," Bowls being still referred to under the description of "*gettire de peer*" (*jeter de pierre*).

Bolingbroke's statute was gradually evaded, for in 1477 Parliament passed a measure (17 Edward IV.) enlarging the scope of the former, and decreeing that anyone playing a forbidden game was liable to two years' imprisonment and a fine of £10, while he who allowed any game to be played in "his Gardens, or other Place shall be Three Years imprisoned and forfeit £20."

Of all these minatory Acts the most interesting is the 33rd of Henry VIII., 1541. For in it occurs the first statutory mention of the word "Bowls," and from it we learn that the condition of "Bowyers, Fletchers

[arrow-makers], Stringers and Arrowhead-makers " had grown desperate in consequence of the "customable usage" of Bowls and other games devised by "many subtil inventive and crafty Persons." It was accordingly enacted (§11) that no person whatsoever was to keep an alley, or place of Bowling, for "Gain, Lucre, or Living," or suffer the game to be played, subject to a penalty of forty shillings for every day on which the law was broken. Section 12 declared that everyone who played was "to forfeit for every Time so doing 6s. 8d." Moreover, magistrates and other competent persons were enjoined (§14) to visit places and alleys to ascertain whether forbidden games were secretly pursued and, if so, to arrest and imprison players and keepers alike, until they found bail for their good behaviour. To make assurance doubly sure, mayors and other officers were required (§15) to search for all such places weekly, "or at the farthest at all Times hereafter once every Month," under penalty of 40 shillings' fine for every month of default.

To render the playing of Bowls even more difficult and more irksome, section 16 of this ruthless Act stipulated that "no Manner of Artificer or Craftsman of any Handicraft or Occupation, Husbandman, Apprentice, Labourer,

Servant at Husbandry, Journeyman, or Servant of Artificer, Mariners, Fishermen, Watermen, or any Serving-man" should play Bowls, or other inhibited games, "out of Christmas, under the pain of 20 shillings to be forfeit for every Time; and in Christmas to play at any of the said Games in their Masters' Houses, or in their Masters' Presence; and also that no Manner of Persons shall at any Time play at any Bowl or Bowls in open Places out of his Garden or Orchard, upon the Pain for every time so offending, to forfeit 6s. 8d." As a concession to folk of title and the gentry, however, section 23 provided that "every Nobleman and other, having Manors, Lands, Tenements, or other yearly Profits, for Term of Life in his own Right, or in his Wife's Right, to the yearly Value of an hundred Pounds or above," was free to play Bowls, without penalty, "within the Precinct of his or their Houses, Gardens, or Orchards."

Bluff King Hal, with wonted masterfulness, ordered, for his own delectation, Bowling alleys to be laid down at Whitehall Palace. His fatuous attempt at repression remained on the Statute Book for more than three centuries. By 8 and 9 Victoria, Cap. 109, so much of 33 Henry VIII., Cap. 9, as declared "Bowling, Coyting" and the like unlawful was repealed.

Strictly speaking, therefore, Bowls was, until 1845, actually an illegal pastime and might not be practised save under pains and penalties.

Significant light is cast upon the game and the green by 2 and 3 Philip and Mary, Cap. 9, passed at Westminster in 1555. According to this Act it appeared that, under cover of repairing, ostensibly for play, to gardens and places licensed for Bowling, “idle and misruled persons” daily and secretly held “divers and many unlawful Assemblies, Conventicles, Seditions and Conspiracies,” whereby “Robberies and many other Misdemeanors” ensued, to the breach of their Highnesses’ peace. It was consequently enacted that from and after the next Christmas all such licences should be “utterly void and of none effect.” Doubtless the unhappy Queen and her saturnine spouse were less concerned to put down Bowls than to suppress clandestine meetings of Protestants forced, like the Covenanters of a later day, to resort to stratagem—such the immanent perils of the time—to worship God in their own way and vindicate the inalienable rights of conscience.

But the bowling alley shared, with the Bowling green, the denunciations of sovereigns and Parliaments. And that is another story. Alleys were of two kinds. One was practically a Bowling green of narrow dimensions but

suitable length, usually constructed in the grounds of great folk's mansions between hedges of yew or other appropriate tree. The other kind was under cover and play was had over an artificial floor of wood or other substance ; in short, what is now styled a skittle alley. In point of time the sequence was, first, the green, then the alley. Bowls was a summer recreation and lovers of the game naturally wished for an amusement of kindred interest to occupy their winter leisure, and in due course excogitated skittles, or some similar recreation, which could be pursued indoors. The first bowling alley was opened in London in 1455.

Inevitably perhaps, but in the long run unfortunately, the alleys and nearly all the greens were constructed in immediate proximity to hotels and taverns. In course of time rakes and gamblers haunted the alleys, and betting and matches for stakes became a regular feature. The discredit attaching to the alley gradually extended to the green, and the brethren of the rolling bowl had only themselves to thank for the degradation of a healthy and innocent pastime. Little wonder future generations came to regard Bowls as a pothouse recreation.

Stephen Gosson, a native of Kent, who abandoned the stage for the pulpit, in his

*School of Abuse* (1579), a denunciation of playhouses, which he dedicated, without permission, to Sir Philip Sidney—and was “for hys labor scorned,” said Edmund Spenser—draws a touching picture of the clamant evils of the bowling alleys. He paints them as “privy moths that eat up the credit of many idle citzens; whose gains at home are not able to weigh down their losses abroad; whose shops are so far from maintaining their play, that their wives and children cry out for bread, and go to bed supperless often in the year.” He further illustrates the deterioration of his times by lamenting that “Our wreastling at arms is turned to wallowyng in ladies’ laps, our courage to cowardice, our running to ryot, *our bowes into bolles*, and our darts to dishes.”

On other grounds Roger Ascham took exception to Bowls, but his love of archery may have coloured his protest. “If a scholar,” he says in *Toxophilus*, “shoulde use bowles or tennies, the labour is to vehement and unequall, which is condempned of Galene: the example very ill for other men, when by so many actes they be made unlawfull.” That is, he deprecated the playing of Bowls because, having been pronounced illegal in so many statutes, it set a bad example to others. Yet one may smile at his naïve



opinion that Galen would have condemned the game, because the exertion was too vehement and unequal. Against this one may set Francis Bacon's view that "Bowling is good for the Stone and Reines" [kidneys].

In spite, however, of the ugly abuses that had lowered Bowls in general estimation, "the spacious times of great Elizabeth" possess exceptional interest for Bowlers for two reasons, coupled the one with Sir Francis Drake, and the other with William Shakspeare.

While Drake and other officers of the English fleet were engaged, on the afternoon of July 19th, 1588, in the immortal match on Plymouth Hoe, a small armed vessel—a Scots privateer—ran into the harbour. Fleming, her commander, said he had that morning seen the Spanish Armada off Cornwall. Thereupon a move was made to the ships' boats; but Drake insisted that the match should be played out, saying that there was plenty of time both to win the game and beat the Spaniards. Alas! *Sunt lacrimae rerum*. Drake, it is averred, lost the rubber—to Sir John Hawkins, according to one tradition,—though he made up for it by helping to thrash the Spaniards.

In the Museum of the Bath Saloons at Torquay is a collection of curiosities presented to the borough in 1894 by Dr. Charles Paget

Blake. Certain exhibits are prosaically described in the catalogue as "Six Bowls from the Tower of Trematon Castle," near Saltash, in Cornwall, which was occupied by Drake's descendants. The Bowls are said to have belonged to Sir Francis. Confident is the belief in Devonshire that among them are the actual bowls Drake used in his memorable match. A green has been laid down on the Hoe on the supposed site of the original green, or as near to it as may be.

Although the famous episode is inherently probable, iconoclasts have chortled over it with wicked joy, but Sir J. Knox Laughton accepts it as "old and apparently well founded." Several years ago Mr. W. H. K. Wright, the chief librarian of the Municipal Library at Plymouth, investigated the subject and came to the conclusion that the incident was true. It was mentioned by William Oldys in the biography of Raleigh which he wrote for an edition of Sir Walter's *History of the World*, published in 1736, and in which he referred to the *Phœnix Britannicus*, a miscellaneous collection of tracts, compiled by J. Morgan in 1732. In this work is reprinted a pamphlet entitled *Vox Populi, or Count Gondomar's Transactions, during his Embassy in England*, Part II. 1624 ("Wherein are discovered his Treacherous and Subtil Practices, to the Ruin

as well of England as the Netherlands"). It is fair to say, however, that this document which has been ascribed to Thomas Scott (1580-1626), a clergyman and political writer—must be taken with some reserve. It contains the following utterance supposititiously ascribed to the Duke of Braganza:—"Did we not in '88, carry our business, for England, so cunningly and secretly, as well in that well-dissembled Treaty with the English, near Ostend . . . as in bringing our Navy to their Shoars, while their Commanders and Captains were at Bowls upon the Hoe of Plymouth?" Tradition should never be lightly discarded. Oldys's own words are: "The captains and commanders were then, it seems, at Bowls upon the Hoe at Plymouth; and the tradition goes, that Drake needs see the game up, but was soon prevailed on to go and play out the rubbers with the Spaniards."

Assuming the truth of the story, it is safe to say that in all the world's history of pastimes no game so fills the imagination as that match at Bowls played by those tough old English sea-dogs what time the Armada was beating up Channel.

Shakspeare was not only a frequenter of greens and alleys, but a keen and capable player. Leigh Hunt surmises, in his genially gossipy way, that Shakspeare divided his de-



GREEN OF THE SOUTHAMPTON TOWN B.C. IN 1870, SHOWING THE OLD PLAISANCE OR  
 GARDEN, AND THE SOUTH CASTLE TOWER. (See p. 6.)

(From a Photograph kindly lent by Mr. [Name])



clining years between his books, his Bowling green, and his daughter Susanna. But he must have had an intimate acquaintance with the game long before he finally retired to Stratford-on-Avon in 1609, the year in which—so Dr. Furnivall conjectures—he withdrew from active connection with the theatre. The Commodity speech of the Bastard, Philip Faulconbridge, in *King John* (Act II., Scene 2) makes such elaborate use of bias by way of metaphor that the inference is inevitable that the writer of it must have been a constant and expert Bowler. The play is considered by Professor Delius of Bonn to have been composed in 1596.

Shakspere's allusions to Bowls in others of his plays are not only apt in themselves, but of real value to the historian of the game. For instance, from the Bastard's speech and Petruchio's (*The Taming of the Shrew*, Act IV., Scene 5)

Well, forward, forward ! Thus the bowl should run,  
And not unluckily against the bias,

as well as other passages, we learn that biassed bowls were already in vogue in the 16th century. Whether women should play Bowls or not is a question much mooted in these days, but the illustrious playwright must have had justification in actual experience for



making women participate in the pastime. In *King Richard II.* (Act III., Scene 4) the Queen holds converse with one of her ladies-in-waiting in the Duke of York's garden at King's Langley (in Hertfordshire) :—

*Queen.* What sport shall we devise here in this garden,  
To drive away the heavy thought of care ?

*Lady.* Madam, we'll play at bowls.

*Queen.* 'Twill make me think the world is full of rubs,  
And that my fortune runs against the bias.

From Cloten's " Was there ever man had such luck ! when I kissed the jack, upon an up-cast to be hit away," in *Cymbeline* (Act II., Scene 1), anachronism though it be in the mouth of a British king's stepson, we gather that the object ball was called the jack at least three hundred years ago. These sidelights on the game are really interesting and important. We derive no similar information about Bowls from any other poet, ancient or modern. The conclusion is irresistible, therefore, that Shakspeare knew the game and played it as though he loved it.

## CHAPTER II

### THE DARK AGE OF BOWLS

James I.'s "Declaration"—Sunday Play—Sir John Suckling's Gambling—Charles I. as a Bowler—Earle's Description of a Green—Quarles's "Emblem"—Evelyn's Match at Durdans—The Green at the Spring Garden—Peccadillo Hall—The Greens in Marylebone—Bowling Green House, Putney—The "Bowling Green," Blackheath—Pepys's Allusions—The Seamy Side—*The Complot Gamester*—Sir Isaac Newton's Penalty—Swift's Comical Blunder—Bowls in *The Spectator*—John Metcalf's Prowess—Celebrated Lovers of the Game—The Silence of Charles Lamb—References in *Aurora Leigh*—The Curse and the Blight.

ALTHOUGH James I. of England had, in his *Basilikon Doron*, recommended to his son Prince Henry a "moderate practice" of Bowls, he forbade the game "in the meaner sort of people" when, in 1618, he caused to be published "The Kinges Majesties Declaration concerning Lawfull Sports" which might be indulged in on Sunday afternoons, "after the ending of all Divine Service." Nor was the ban lifted in 1625 when Charles I. reissued the "Declaration."

Sunday sports were not a new feature in the

life of the community. The report that John Knox himself was a backslider is to be traced to the tradition that when he visited John Calvin in Geneva on a Sunday, he found the latter engaged in bowling on a green. This, says Dr. David Hay Fleming, "does not prove, does not indeed imply that Knox approved of Calvin's conduct, or that he took part in the game," even assuming the tradition to be well founded.

John Aylmer (1521-1594), Bishop of London, thought it no sin to play Bowls of a Sunday afternoon at Fulham Palace. Folk were scandalised, but it was at his language, which was such as "justly to expose his character to reproach," and not at his play. Archbishop Laud, too, used to play Bowls on Sunday, thereby incurring the wrath of William Prynne, who sneered, in *Canterbury's Doom*, at his Grace's habit as "a pretty Archiepiscopall Sabbath recreation."

Sir Nicholas L'Estrange relates a quaint story of Robert Greville, 2nd Lord Brooke, the Parliamentary General, who was killed on March 2nd, 1643, during the siege of Lichfield. Brooke was much influenced by "those of the preciser sort," who yet allowed him "Christian libertie for his recreations." While at Bowls one day, he followed "his cast with much eagernesse," crying, "Rubbe, rubbe, rubbe,





*Virusq; crepundia Merces.*  
*Will. Marshall sculpsit.*

THE DEVIL'S BOWLING GREEN: A SERMON IN BOWLS. (See p. 24.)

(From Quarles's "Emblems," 1635.)

rubbe, rubbe.” “His chaplaine (a very strict man) runns presently to him; and, in the hearing of diverse, ‘O good my Lord, leave that to God—you must leave that to God!’ says he.”

Worse than Sunday play was the gambling which was the curse of Bowls throughout the 17th and 18th centuries. Sir John Suckling, the Courtier-poet, prized “a lucky hit at Bowls above all the trophies of wit,” which may explain the shameful story told by John Aubrey, the antiquary, who records that Suckling’s sisters came “to the Peccadillo Bowling green crying, for feare he should lose all their portions.”

Bowls has been styled the Royal game and among British kings there was no more enthusiastic Bowler than Charles I. He frequently played for heavy stakes on the beautiful green at Barking Hall, in Essex, which belonged to Richard Shute, a Turkey merchant. After one bout Charles’s losses amounted to the enormous sum of £1000. Shute proposed another game, on the plea that his luck might mend.

“No, Shute,” said the King, “thou hast won the day, and much good may it do thee; but I must remember I have a wife and children.”

During his confinement at Caversham Park,



Charles occasionally visited the green at the old inn at Collins End, near Goring Heath, in Oxfordshire, to enjoy a game. Long after the King's execution, mine host commemorated his royal customer and his love of Bowls by exhibiting as a signboard a likeness of his Majesty, after one of Van Dyck's portraits, to which Boniface himself supplied the following audacious couplets:—

Stop, traveller, stop ! In yonder peaceful glade  
His favourite game the royal martyr played ;  
Here, stripped of honours, children, freedom, rank,  
Drank from the bowl, and bowl'd for what he drank ;  
Sought in a cheerful glass his cares to drown  
And changed his guinea ere he lost his Crown.

John Earle, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury, etches a brilliant word-picture of a Bowling green of this period in an essay in *Microcosmographie* (1628). “ A Bowle-Alley [green],” he writes, “ is the place where there are three things thrown away besides Bowls, to wit, time, money, and curses, and the last ten for one. The best Sport in it is the Gamesters, and he enjoys it that lookes on and bets not. It is the Schoole of wrangling, and worse than Schooles, for men will cavill here for an haire's breadth, and make a stirre where a straw would end the controversie. No Anticke screwes men's bodies into such strange flexures, and you would think them here senseles, to

speake sense to their Bowle, and put their trust in intreaties for a good cast. . . . To give you the Morall of it ; It is the Embleme of the world, or the world's ambition ; where most are short, or over, or wide, or wrong-Byas't, and some few justle in to the Mistris, Fortune. And it is here as in the Court, where the neerest are most spighted, and all blowes aym'd at the Toucher."

As to these lifelike "thumb-nail" sketches, "cavilling for a hair's breadth" refers to disputes about which bowl is nearest to the jack, while the "ending straw" is an allusion to the former custom of measuring the distance of the bowl from the jack by means of a straw or reed, a mode not yet extinct. "Strange flexures" and even speeches to bowls are still visible and audible on many a green. Then, most are "short" of the jack, or beyond it ("over"), or "wrong-biassed," that is, have played with the biassed side of the bowl outermost. The "mistress" is the jack, and, as the player's object is to bowl his bowl with such nicety of strength and bias as to place it nearer to the jack than the nearest of his rival's, he was said to "justle in," or kiss his mistress. But when a bowl actually touched or lay on the jack, the obvious business of the other player was to dislodge it by "aiming blows at the toucher."

In the tenth Emblem of his *Emblems, Divine and Moral*, published in 1635, Francis Quarles, plainly borrowing from Earle, gave quite a masterly picture, full of graphic touches, of the art of playing Bowls: and all to the scathing text, "Ye are of your father the devil: and the lusts of your father ye will do" (John viii. 44). The poem is a parable. Under the guise of a match at Bowls, we witness the struggle between the gamesters, Cupid and Mammon,—the bowls being sinful thoughts, the jack the world, Satan the director, Fortune the scorer, and the prize "a crown for fools." Quarles's conclusion—

The vulgar proverb's crost, he hardly can  
Be a good bowler and an honest man—

reveals the depth of infamy the game had sounded in his day.

Accompanying the Emblem is a Plate (engraved by William Marshall, one of the earliest of the English engravers, probably after his own design), which is more than a curiosity, being a valuable record of the game in Charles I.'s time, despite the contemptuous Latin motto, *Utriusque crepundia merces*, "A child's rattle the reward of both players."

Under the Commonwealth Bowls was regarded, says Macaulay, "with no friendly eye." Yet even the Puritans could not sup-

press betting. So respectable a citizen as John Evelyn deemed it no harm to play matches for money, for he accepted a challenge to a test of skill at Durdans—now Lord Rosebery's place—near Epsom for £10, and won game and cash on August 14th, 1657, as he notes in his *Diary* with an air of triumph. We need not blame the Puritans. They lived in times that tried men's souls, and to err is human. Nor had sportsmen of the baser sort long to wait for relief. When the Merry Monarch "came to his ain" (1660), the reins were speedily given to profligacy and, as a popular pastime, Bowls almost literally went to pot.

Possibly recognising that hostile legislation had, by its very stringency, defeated its own ends, James I., in 1620, authorised Clement Cottrell, the groom-porter of his household, to license certain houses and places as Bowling alleys, and thirty-one alleys were soon in full swing in London, Westminster, and Southwark. One of the best known was the green at the Spring Garden at Charing Cross, concerning which Isaac Disraeli, in his *Curiosities of Literature*, recounts a singular scene.

While Charles I. and the Duke of Buckingham were watching the Bowlers, the latter put on his hat. "One Wilson, a Scotsman, first seizing the Duke's hand, snatched it off, saying, 'Off with your hat before the King!'

Buckingham, not able to restrain his quick feelings, kicked the Scotsman; but the King interfering, said, 'Let him alone, George; he is either mad or a fool.' 'No, sir,' replied Wilson; 'I am a sober man, and if your Majesty would give me leave, I would tell you that of this man, which many know, and none dare speak.' " Query: what had Wilson to disclose?

Grosser and more subtle was the insult offered to Philip Herbert, Earl of Montgomery, not yet 4th Earl of Pembroke. He had, says Sir Nicholas L'Estrange, "received a disgracefull switch over the face by a Scott (by occasion of the lye), at King James his first comming into England. The impression of which affront, so patiently put up, remained in the memorie of many, a foule staine to his honour. And being at Boules in the Spring Garden afterward, there grew an hott contest between this Lord and Sir Robert Bell about the distance of two Boules [from the jack], and so far that the Lord gave the Knight the lye: Sir Robert startles and stormes about, and in a well dissembled rage (knowing how to wound him deepe without a stroake), cryes out, 'Give me a *switch*!' The company smiled, and the conscious Lord scornfully replies, 'And what dare you and that doe?' 'Measure the cast and *beate you*, my Lord, I'le warrant,'

sayes he." The Scot was John Ramsay, the favourite of James I., who, for his services in the affair of the Gowrie Conspiracy, afterwards created him Viscount Haddington and Earl of Holderness. The first outrage, so meekly borne by Herbert, was perpetrated at Croydon Races in 1607.

Piccadilly (Peccadillo) Hall, which Suckling frequented, stood at the top of the Haymarket and, in 1641, in the words of Lord Clarendon, the grandfather of two Queens of England (Mary and Anne), "was a fair house for entertainment and gaming, with handsome gravel walks with shade, and where were an upper and lower Bowling green, whither very many of the nobility and gentry of the best quality resorted both for exercise and conversation."

Marylebone, about a mile to the north-west, was noted for its Bowling greens. The green at the "Rose of Normandy," in the High Street, measured 112 paces one way and 88 the other, and was "double set with quickset hedges, full-grown, and kept in excellent order, and indented like town walls." But much more popular were the greens in Marylebone Gardens, adjoining the hostelry on the east. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu wrote how "Some dukes at Marybone bowl time away," while one Duchess of Devonshire used to convey her guests to the green and watch them play



until nine o'clock at night. Philosophical John Locke, referring in 1679 to the English sports which a curious stranger might study, remarks that several persons of distinction might be seen bowling at "Marebone" twice or thrice a week.

Small heed was paid to the care of many of the greens. Charles Macklin, the actor and centenarian, is said to have played the part of "Sir Charles Freeman," in George Farquhar's *Beaux's Stratagem*, in Lee and Harper's booth on the Bowling green in Southwark on February 18th, 1780.

Bowling Green House in Putney, in which William Pitt died on January 23rd, 1806, was so called after a somewhat notorious green adjoining it. The mansion itself had once been used as a clubhouse and enjoyed an evil reputation for deep play. According to Horace Walpole, James McLean, the "fashionable highwayman," who was hanged at Tyburn in 1750, created a disturbance on the green, two months or so before his arrest, by challenging an officer.

On Blackheath the "Bowling Green" was a favourite house of call. John Evelyn stated in his *Diary* (May 9th, 1683) that Blackheath Fair, founded through Lord Dartmouth's instrumentality, for the sale of cattle, chiefly enriched "the new tavern at the Bowling green." The name of the inn was altered to

# The Oxford Bowlers Set by M<sup>r</sup> Vanbrugh

*I* am a Jolly Bowler and of a Bowling Club and all our Notes are Fly Fly  
Fly Rub Rub a Thousand Rub And a Bowling we will go will go a Bowling  
we will go And a Bowling we will go will go a Bowling we will go

- 2 There's ne'er a Set of Bowlers so far & near renown'd  
We Trust we Strive with Grinace no Coar of Bowl around  
And a Bowling we will go &c.
- 3 We have the finest Bowling Green there's none w<sup>th</sup> us can vie  
Carrots & Eggs & Pots & Jugs to Drink when we're a Dry  
And a Bowling &c.
- 4 The Rudiments of Sciences in Bowling may be found  
For 'tis in vain to think to Bowl till first you know of Ground  
And a Bowling &c.
- 5 From Bowling we may Learn to the patience of a Job  
For as in Bowling so in Life we meet with many a rub  
And a Bowling &c.
- 6 What Trifles men contend for in Bowling's understood  
When Mortals Sweat & fret & vex about a peice of wood  
And a Bowling &c.
- 7 What fickleness of Fortune in Emblem hear is seen  
For often those who touch of Block are thrown out of of Green  
And a Bowling &c.
- 8 Of Courtiers and of Bowlers the Fortune is the same  
Each Jostles tother out of place & plays a Seperate Game  
And a Bowling &c.
- 9 In Bowling as in Battle the Leaders apt to claim  
The Glory to himself tho' the followers gett the Game  
And a Bowling &c.
- 10 The Jack is like a young Coquet each Bowl resembles Man  
They follow wheresoe'er she leads as fast as e're they can  
And a Bowling &c.
- 11 What tho in other Gameing a blockhead be a Jest  
Yet he that's nearest blockhead in Bowling is the best  
And a Bowling &c.
- 12 Some Nantz then of Bowling Since we have had our fill  
Let's lay aside our Jack Boys and each Man take his Gill  
And a Bowling &c.

For the  
FLUTE

SIR JOHN VANBRUGH'S SONG, "THE OXFORD BOWLERS." (See p. 36.)

(Facsimile of an early score, from a Photograph by Mr. Frank Orfeur.)



“ The Green Man ” about the end of the 18th century, but when the house was rebuilt, in 1869, the old green was also built over.

But though, until a comparatively recent period, most of the greens in England were laid down in connection with taverns, tea gardens, and the like, private greens were far from rare in the grounds of noblemen, squires and corporate bodies, such as some of the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge. In Charles II.'s reign, according to Macaulay, the parson was almost a retainer in many families. He was of small account and, for ten pounds a year, his board and a garret, might always be relied upon in fine weather for a hand at Bowls. As Samuel Pepys occasionally reminds us that he found great people “ at Bowles,” the poor parson's office would be no sinecure, whatever the demands upon him in other directions.

What a pity garrulous and entertaining Pepys did not feel inspired by the game! Himself a Bowler, the greens and alleys afforded ample scope for the tittle-tattle and scandal he revelled in, and it is impossible to suppose that their *habitués* did not furnish some materials for the intimate social history of the times. But all the Secretary to the Admiralty chronicles are such perfunctory items as these :—

“ May 1st, 1661. Up early, and bated at

Petersfield, in the room which the King lay in lately at his being there. Here very merry, and played us and our wives at Bowls." This and a later entry, however, prove that women sometimes actually played, as in Shakspeare's day.

"June 5th, 1661. After dinner to the office, where we sat and did business, and Sir W. Pen [Admiral Penn] and I went home with R. Slingsby [a naval chum] to Bowls in his ally, and there had good sport, and afterwards went in and drank and talked."

"July 26th, 1662. White Hall garden and the Bowling ally (where lords and ladies are now at Bowles), in brave condition."

"August 6th, 1664. W. Joyce [his cousin] and I to a game at Bowles on the green there [Stevenage] till eight o'clock" (in the morning).

But the 17th-century writers always bring us hard up against the seamy side of Bowls. The *Compleat Gamester*, published in London in 1674 and ascribed, rather tentatively, to Charles Cotton, the poet and friend of Izaak Walton, is sufficiently outspoken. "Bowling," it says, "is a Game or Recreation, which if moderately used is very healthy for the body and would be much more commendable than it is were it not for those swarms of Rooks which so pester Bowling Greens, Bares [bare open pitches], and Bowling Alleys where

any such places are to be found, some making so small a spot of ground yield them more annually than fifty Acres of Land shall do elsewhere about this City, and this done cunning, betting, crafty matching, and basely playing booty"—which is a rather dark saying.

On the whole, 'tis scarcely surprising that, for two hundred years after the Restoration, Bowls altogether lost caste as a public recreation. But licence was impossible on private greens, and on these the pastime was practised with great gusto by some folk, while others delightedly played the part of onlookers. Sir Isaac Newton paid dearly for a relaxation in this sort. John Conduitt, Master of the Mint, who married Sir Isaac's niece, wrote that when Newton "was in the warmest pursuit of his discoveries, he going out, left a candle upon his table amongst his papers, he went down into the Bowling green [of Trinity College, Cambridge], and meeting somebody who diverted him from returning as he intended, the candle set fire to his papers (and he could never recover them). Upon my asking whether they related to his *Optics* or the *Method of Fluxions*, he said he believed there was some relating to both, and that he was obliged to work them all over again." This bald statement disposes of the familiar anecdote that Sir Isaac, on his return from church one winter



morning, found that his dog had upset a lighted taper which set fire to several papers containing the results of investigations he had been pursuing for years. "Oh! Diamond! Diamond!" quoth the mathematician, "little do you know the mischief you have done me!"

From a curious reference in *Gulliver's Travels to Lilliput* (Chap. viii.) one doubts whether Dean Swift really knew much about the game. "The rest of my cattle," it is written, "I got safe ashore, and set them a-grazing in a Bowling green at Greenwich, where the fineness of the grass made them feed very heartily, though I had always feared the contrary." So had we: to turn out kye to pasture on a Bowling green were either cruelty to animals or proof positive the herdsman was daft.

Joseph Addison chose the Bowling green as the subject of one of his Latin poems, although the title—"Sphaeristerium"—was not any happier than the *jactus lapidum* of old Fitzstephen. Still, a dead language was not selected to veil any depreciation of the pastime. Of greater human interest was his protest in his paper in *The Spectator* (No. 126: Wednesday, July 25th, 1711): "Since my Stay at Sir Roger's in the Country, I daily find more Instances of this narrow Party-Humour. Being upon a Bowling green at a Neighbouring Market-Town the other Day

(for this is the place where the Gentlemen of one Side meet once a Week), I observed a Stranger among them of a better Presence and genteeler Behaviour than ordinary; but was much surprised, that notwithstanding he was a very fair *Bettor*, no Body would take him up. But upon Enquiry I found, that he was one who had given a disagreeable Vote in a former Parliament, for which Reason there was not a Man upon that Bowling green who would have so much Correspondence with him as to Win his Money of him."

"Blind Jack of Knaresborough," John Metcalf (1717-1810), the famous road-maker and builder of bridges, was the most remarkable Bowler of the 18th century—if, indeed, he was ever equalled at any period. Though he lost his sight at the age of six years through illness, his athletic achievements and other feats were little short of marvellous. He fought at the battle of Falkirk in 1746 and fiddled at the Duke of Cumberland's ball at Aberdeen in the same year. He was a first-rate wrestler and boxer and, standing fully six feet in his stockings, usually managed to give a good account of himself. A daring rider, his delight was to follow the hounds and even take part in horse races. He once won a singular mile race. The course was a circle, the ground being marked by stakes or posts, the race being

twice round. Metcalf borrowed the dinner bells from the inns at Harrogate, where the race was held, and stationed a man with a bell at each post. By the sound of the bells, which rang in succession as post after post was neared, he accomplished his exploit. He was also an expert pedestrian and once walked from London to Harrogate, a distance of 200 miles, in six days, beating Colonel Liddel, who rode in his carriage and had offered him a seat, by two days. How he played Bowls so well as he did was a mystery even to those who knew his method. He relied upon his hearing, which was exceptionally acute. One friend stood at the jack and another about the middle of the green, and by speaking to each in turn he gauged the distance by the sound and made an excellent game.

Other celebrated men found their pleasure in Bowls even while the pastime was under a cloud. Josiah Wedgwood, the potter, had a green laid down in the grounds of Etruria Hall, his house near Hanley, in Staffordshire, where he welcomed neighbours and those especially who followed the same craft as himself. Charles James Fox assured Samuel Rogers, the banker-poet, that he liked Bowls. The green at Holland House, Kensington, he told him, was mown every day and he lamented that he could not construct one at his

place, St. Anne's Hill, near Chertsey, in Surrey. John Dalton, the propounder of the Atomic Theory, did not exactly divide his time between his laboratory and the green, but his close application to chemical research, writes Dr. W. A. Shaw, in *Old and New Manchester*, "was regularly broken on Thursday afternoons, when he went out of town to the 'Dog and Partridge,' and played a fixed number of games at Bowls, watching the bowls with great anxiety, which he manifested in the movements of his body, as keen Bowlers usually do." When Colonel T. W. Higginson, the accomplished American essayist and poet, was at Greta Hall—for forty years Robert Southey's home,—he says (*Part of a Man's Life*) he was shown the very spot where the Laureate "used to sit for hours out of doors reading or writing, his chair being placed on the Bowling green." As to which one need only remark that Southey might have had more sense.

One should have thought that Charles Lamb would find Bowls either an attractive pastime or a fascinating theme, but Elia's sole reference to it in his *Essays* is that it was one of his father's numerous accomplishments that he "took a hand at quadrille or Bowls with equal facility" ("The Old Benchers of the Inner Temple"). On the contrary, we may very reasonably con-

clude, from several allusions in *Aurora Leigh*, that Elizabeth Barrett Browning had many opportunities of watching a game. In Book II., for instance, Aurora having declined her cousin's offer of marriage, dilates upon the work she has to do, the work there is for all to do :—

Wipe out earth's furrows of the Thine and Mine,  
And leave one green, for men to play at Bowls,  
With innings for them all.

Moreover, in Book III. the opinion is hazarded that—

Bowling greens  
Of poets are fresher than the world's highways.

And in Book V. she proudly, if not too luminously, asserts that—

A living Cæsar would not dare to play  
At Bowls, with such as my dead father is.

Let me not be misunderstood when I describe the two centuries and a half which followed Tudor rule as the dark age of Bowls. Bowlers have always been a more or less jovial crew, and the traditional custom will “die hard” according to which an inter-club match is often the prelude to a “social evening,” when song and speech rattle at each other's heels. Sir John Vanbrugh's “Oxford Bowlers,” a cleverer composition than the generality of its kind,

with its sly quirks and stock jokes of the usual shabby sort, gives a good idea of the song which the brotherhood of the greens affected while Queen Anne was still in the flesh. By its very nature the game brings players into intimate relations, and many friendships, begun in generous rivalry, have been firmly cemented in later life. What Robert Burns calls the "frater-feeling strong," one of the pastime's chief claims to favour, will not be readily abandoned by the bulk of Bowlers.

However, notwithstanding the rational delight the game still continued to afford many worthy folk, there is no doubt but that, during several generations, Bowls was boycotted and despised as a people's pastime, because of its depressing and degrading environment. Every sport is doomed, sooner or later, on which the curse of gambling and the blight of excessive drinking have fallen. How long the period of neglect and dishonour might have lasted it were idle to speculate, since deliverance did ultimately come, though from an unexpected quarter, and Bowls at length took its legitimate position among the noblest games of the world.



## CHAPTER III

### THE SAVING OF THE GAME

The debt to Scotland—Earliest notice of the Game—Candle-riggs Green, Glasgow—The Willowbank Club—Tamson's Green in Edinburgh—Lutton Place Green—A Fairy Ring—The Edinburgh Club—Argyll's Wraith—Bicket's Green, Kilmarnock—W. W. Mitchell's 'Prenticeship—"Borrowing" and "Paying" Bowls—The Game scarcely mentioned by Burns—How Mitchell became Law-maker—The 13th Earl of Eglinton—Glasgow *versus* Ayrshire—A mammoth Object-lesson—Winners of the Eglinton Cup.

To the Scots we owe the salvation of Bowls. They stripped it of its undesirable surroundings and made a beautiful game of it, an open-air pastime without violence, second to none in its scientific and strategical possibilities, and surpassing all in its promotion of good-fellowship. They gave it laws, demonstrated what constituted a perfect green and how to lay and maintain it, and, not only in the daily experience of their own clubs but in encouraging the construction of municipal greens, fostered the game's most valuable social feature—its democratic spirit. The

whole credit of this rescue and revival belongs to Scotland. This was an unexpected quarter whence aid should come, for though Bowls, along with its winter analogue, Curling, has grown to be the national game of the people, the pastime was unquestionably of external origin and developed amidst serious difficulties.

In Scotland Bowls first took root in Glasgow, probably in the latter half of the 16th century ; for when the Kirk Session, in 1595, forbade Sunday play, it is fair to suppose the game had already acquired a formidable degree of popularity. Some have claimed Haddington for its birthplace, but Dr. J. G. Wallace-James informs me that the earliest mention he had noticed in the burgh records is dated 1662, when the frugal grant of £160 Scots was sanctioned for " the laying out of ane Bowling green on the sands." The books of the Kirk Session contain other references to playing at the " Bullets," but Glasgow's right to pride of place is incontestable.

In 1695 the Glasgow Council parted with ground in Candleriggs to Mungo Cochrane solely for the construction of a green. The Willowbank Club claims to be the lineal descendant of those who played here from the very first, and, in that case, is much the oldest club in Scotland. Dr. John Aitkin says that a respected citizen named Dunlop lived

in one of the best houses in Candleriggs, and from his front windows could see the play on the green and hear the crack of the bowls and the typical cry of "Bowler you, Sir!"

In 1818 the Corporation bought back the ground for building purposes, and the Willowbank players were compelled to seek new pastures—but not fresh woods. Indeed, the Club was obliged to make six separate flittings before settling at Dowanhill in 1897, in consequence of the rapid extension of Glasgow. Despite its old-time associations, it only adopted its present title in 1835. Its then green was bounded on one side by Sauchiehall Street, so called from the profusion of saughs, or willows, which adorned the wayside and supplied the Club with a happy, if obvious designation. Glasgow boasts of many other Clubs whose names are household words, but they were all founded in the 19th century. To Bowlers no city is so well known, by name at least, for Thomas Taylor, of Montrose Street, must have sent out thousands of pairs of bowls to "a' the airts the wind can blaw."

In old Edinburgh, efforts to establish the game were somewhat intermittent at the outset. The Merchants' Company in 1691 purchased the mansion in the Cowgate that had once been occupied by Thomas Hamilton, 1st Earl of Haddington (*d.* 1637)—"Tam o'

the Cowgate"—and converted the waste ground behind the house into a Bowling green. Robert Chambers says that "from the low state of the arts," the bowls had to be brought from abroad. "It is gravely reported to the Company on the 6th March, 1693, that the bowls are 'upon the sea homeward.' Ten pairs cost £6 4s. 3d. Scots." Chambers's inference was rather rashly drawn. Probably it was the novelty of the game and not the incompetence of the Edinburgh artificers that led to the bowls being imported, and it is more likely that they came from London than from the Continent. The Excise Office becoming tenants of the building in 1730, the Commissioners let the green to one Thomson, under whose care it grew to be a favoured resort of Bowlers, and to whom "honest" Allan Ramsay alludes when he speaks of the players

wysing [directing] a-jee  
The byas bowls on Tamson's green.

In 1768 two greens were laid out in the grounds of George Heriot's Hospital in Lauriston, and at a later date a club that played here bore the name of The Waverley.

In the long run, however, Auld Reekie did not lag behind the western metropolis, and the greens of the capital are worthy examples of the art of green-building. In fact, the

Australian team which visited the Mother Country in 1901 averred that the green of the Luton Place B.C. (founded in 1860), which owes absolutely nothing to its position, was perhaps the best they had played on during their memorable tour. Another green, the quality of which is really surprising considering that it also is hemmed in by houses, is that of the West End (1861), in Gilmore Place, which is further remarkable for a "fairy ring" that comes mysteriously and goes mysteriously. But the *doyen* of Edinburgh clubs is the Edinburgh (1848), which enjoys the distinction of playing on the green within the precincts of Archers' Hall, the headquarters of the Royal Company of Archers, or the King's Body Guard for Scotland, a corps which, according to James Grant, the patriotic Scots novelist and historian of *Old and New Edinburgh*, "takes precedence of all royal guards and troops of the line."

Many greens are laid with Forres turf—notably that of the South London B.C.—and it is therefore worth noting that, so long ago as 1596, there is an authenticated record of the game in the ancient city of Elgin. Dr. Charles Rampini, in his admirable *History of Moray and Nairn*, mentions that the minute-book of the Kirk Session contains an entry, under date of January 19th of that year,

stating that a goldsmith named Walter Hay was "accusit of playing at the boulis and golff upoun Sondaye in the tym of the sermon," and was bound over, under a penalty of five pounds, not to repeat the offence during "the preaching." It seems that "bools" was once played in Morayshire with heavy iron balls, usually in mid-winter. At Nairn on New Year's Day, Old Style, the fishermen held an annual match on the links, the game constituting the chief amusement of the year and being eagerly looked forward to. It is probable, however, from the character of the implements employed and the season, that the sport resembled the later pastime in little more than name.

For a period Bowls was played in a sort of spasmodic fashion in the grounds of the royal palaces, the policies of the nobles and the gardens of the lairds. The old ballad of "The Bonnie House of Airly," as Mr. R. S. Fittis mentions, relates how the Lady Margaret's dowry or treasure was discovered by the Marquis of Argyll's men:—

They sought it up, they sought it down,  
They sought it late and early,  
And found it in the bonnie balm tree  
That shines on the bowling green o' Airly.

Mr. Fittis further recalls the weird tradition of the Second Sight, noted in Robert Wodrow's



*Analecta*, which showed how Argyll was forewarned of his fate under the axe of The Maiden, while engaged in a game of Bowls with some gentlemen of the Campbell clan. "One of the players, when the Marquis stooped down to lift the bullet [bowl] fell pale, and said to them about him, 'Bless me! what is that I see? My Lord with the head off, and all his shoulders full of blood!'"

On Tom Bicket's green in Kilmarnock, opened in 1740, William W. Mitchell (who was born in 1803 and died at Larkhall on November 2nd, 1884), the Nestor and Solon of Bowls, began to learn the game at the age of eleven. He says that, according to the custom of the period, each player used "three bowls, all of which were biassed by means of lead, with which the inside centre was loaded. The bowls were respectively numbered 1, 2, and 3. No. 3 was called their greatest 'borrowing' bowl, and when played described a somewhat large circuit; No. 2, a less one; while No. 1 ran nearly straight, or, in the bowling phraseology of that day, 'did not *pay* much'; and when a bowl happened to be played rather wide, it was no uncommon occurrence to see the player run after it, calling to the bowl, 'Pay, pay, O pay!'"

Dr. Thomas Somerville, of Jedburgh, asserts that Bowls was a common amusement in his

youth (about 1741), but that in his later years he had observed that many games, though not discontinued, had fallen out of favour, and he implies that Bowls was among them. That there may have been a period of reaction and temporary decline is probable, for, it is significant that, barring a casual metaphor, in the "Prologue" for the Benefit Night of the Manager of the Dumfries Theatre (1790), Bowls is not alluded to in any of the poems or songs of Robert Burns, a people's poet if ever there was one. Nor did the game, or any of its tools and technical terms contribute an idiomatic word to the dialect or language. The sudden renaissance of the game in mid-Scotland in the early Victorian period, however, proved to be the turning-point in the history of Bowls, and, as appeared many years afterwards, had been of world-wide reach and influence.

Making their game on greens of superb quality, which admitted of scientific play of the highest order, Bowlers soon felt the need of a code of laws and a governing body. Accordingly, in 1848, some two hundred representatives from various clubs, who had assembled in Glasgow Town Hall, welcomed a proposal to establish a national Bowling Club, and delegates were chosen to consider it. The subject was fully discussed at a further meeting in March, 1849, and, being "shown to be impracticable,"

the project was dropped. But, bent upon providing a uniform code of laws, they elected "a consulting body, and appointed the present writer as general secretary. He, having accepted the office, drew up a complete Code of Laws, which was ultimately adopted by the whole of the Clubs in the West of Scotland; and these, ever since, have formed the standard laws of the game." In such modest terms Mitchell chronicles the fact that, singlehandedly, he tackled the delicate and complex question of legislation. His success has been mainly posthumous, for though in literary form his laws were susceptible of improvement, they constituted the substance of the code which regulates the rink, pairs, and single-handed games on level greens throughout the British Empire. Thus his name is deservedly the greatest in the history of Bowls.

About the same period Archibald William Montgomerie, 13th Earl of Eglinton and 1st Earl of Winton (1812-1861), manifested an eager interest in pushing the fortunes of the game, which he played with rare gusto if not with consummate skill. He offered for annual competition several prizes, the principal of which were the Silver Bowl (1854), confined to clubs whose greens were situated on his estates; the Gold Bowl (1857), awarded to the winner of the matches between the Eglinton

Estates clubs and clubs in the rest of the county (Ayrshire), the intention being that the games should form a preliminary practice for the Grand Match between Ayrshire and Glasgow; and the Eglinton Cup (1857), a massive silver tankard, held for one year by the club that gains the first prize in the Grand Match. The donor himself took part in the inaugural contest (August 11th, 1857), appearing at the head of five rinks on the Willowbank Green. His lordship skipped the middle rink and his play gave rise to a comic incident. As his bowl was running up the turf, the third man—who was at the jack in temporary charge of the interests of the rink—ejaculated with great and growing emphasis, “I like you, my Lord! I LIKE YOU, MY LORD!! I LIKE YOU, MY LORD!!!” Then, seeing the bowl carried too much way and would not achieve its hoped-for purpose, he abruptly changed his tone and tune to, “O Lord! you’re ower strang!”

Though this encounter has grown to be the mammoth fixture of the year, it began modestly enough. The games take place annually on the greens of Glasgow and those in Ayrshire alternately. In the first match 86 rinks, or 344 Bowlers, were engaged, but to-day an entry of at least 200 rinks, or 1600 players, is customary. On a review of the results of the Grand Match,

the Bowlers of Ayrshire have proved more than fit foemen for their brethren of Glasgow.

Carried through on a single day, a contest of such magnitude affords an object-lesson the like of which will be sought in vain in the annals of any other pastime. Not the least praiseworthy feature is that the players are solely animated by the spirit of amateur sportsmen, with whom the honour of victory and not a fat purse is the sole and all-sufficient incentive to the gaining of glory and renown.

By the courteous co-operation of Mr. Andrew Speir, of Kilwinning, who has managed several of these fixtures with conspicuous success, I have been enabled to compile a list of the winners of the Eglinton Cup since the inauguration of the annual match.

| Year. | Rinks engaged on each side. | Majority for |           | Winning Club.       |
|-------|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------|---------------------|
|       |                             | Glasgow.     | Ayrshire. |                     |
| 1857  | 43                          | 335          | ..        | Wellcroft.          |
| 1858  | 52                          | 44           | ..        | Hillhead.           |
| 1859  | 50                          | 426          | ..        | Kingston.           |
| 1860  | 53                          | ..           | 173       | Ardeer.             |
| 1861  | 56                          | 405          | ..        | Kingston.           |
| 1862  | 57                          | ..           | 149       | Girvan Victoria.    |
| 1863  | 62                          | 425          | ..        | St. Rollox.         |
| 1864  | 64                          | ..           | 130       | Ardeer.             |
| 1865  | 74                          | 435          | ..        | Calton.             |
| 1866  | 94                          | 89           | ..        | Kingston.           |
| 1867  | 82                          | 170          | ..        | Govan.              |
| 1868  | 83                          | ..           | 180       | Kerelaw.            |
| 1869  | 86                          | 281          | ..        | Pollokshields.      |
| 1870  | 88                          | ..           | 159       | Kilbirnie Ladeside. |
| 1871  | 88                          | 56           | ..        | Whitevale.          |







ANDREW H. HAMILTON, S.S.C.,  
SECRETARY AND TREASURER OF THE SCOTTISH B.A. (*See p. 51.*)  
(*From a Photograph by Mr. W. Drummond Young, Edinburgh.*)

# EGLINTON CUP WINNERS

49

| Year. | Rinks engaged on each side. | Majority for |           | Winning Club.                                 |
|-------|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------|-----------------------------------------------|
|       |                             | Glasgow.     | Ayrshire. |                                               |
| 1872  | 89                          | ..           | 306       | Ardeer.                                       |
| 1873  | 91                          | 428          | ..        | Hillhead.                                     |
| 1874  | 94                          | ..           | 192       | Largs.                                        |
| 1875  | 94                          | 364          | ..        | Queen's Park.                                 |
| 1876  | 84                          | ..           | 333       | Girvan Victoria.                              |
| 1877  | 99                          | 267          | ..        | Albany.                                       |
| 1878  | 94                          | ..           | 415       | Dalry.                                        |
| 1879  | 111                         | 59           | ..        | Partick.                                      |
| 1880  | 103                         | ..           | 355       | Dalmellington.                                |
| 1881  | 110                         | 63           | ..        | Govan.                                        |
| 1882  | 114                         | ..           | 477       | Ardeer.                                       |
| 1883  | 107                         | 227          | ..        | Queen's Park.                                 |
| 1884  | 108                         | ..           | 478       | Galston Loudoun<br>Working Men's.             |
| 1885  | 111                         | 152          | ..        | Bellahouston.                                 |
| 1886  | 109                         | ..           | 630       | Girvan Victoria.                              |
| 1887  | 101                         | ..           | 56        | Kilmarnock, West<br>Netherton.                |
| 1888  | 105                         | ..           | 382       | Saltcoats.                                    |
| 1889  | 105                         | ..           | 122       | Kilmarnock and<br>Cumnock. } Equal.           |
| 1890  | 109                         | ..           | 372       | Cumnock.                                      |
| 1891  | 115                         | 12           | ..        | Albany.                                       |
| 1892  | 113                         | ..           | 623       | Dalry.                                        |
| 1893  | 116                         | ..           | 130       | Troon.                                        |
| 1894  | 121                         | ..           | 748       | Dalry.                                        |
| 1895  | 125                         | 172          | ..        | Maryhill.                                     |
| 1896  | 138                         | ..           | 645       | Dreghorn.                                     |
| 1897  | 140                         | 118          | ..        | Wellcroft.                                    |
| 1898  | 136                         | ..           | 587       | Troon.                                        |
| 1899  | 140                         | 133          | ..        | Wellcroft.                                    |
| 1900  | 135                         | ..           | 440       | Galston Loudoun<br>Working Men's.             |
| 1901  | 145                         | 301          | ..        | Whitevale.                                    |
| 1902  | 144                         | ..           | 499       | Dalry.                                        |
| 1903  | 144                         | 205          | ..        | Springburn.                                   |
| 1904  | 140                         | ..           | 495       | Dreghorn.                                     |
| 1905  | 160                         | 368          | ..        | Camphill.                                     |
| 1906  | 166                         | ..           | 676       | Kilmaurs.                                     |
| 1907  | 170                         | ..           | 96        | Dalry.                                        |
| 1908  | 171                         | ..           | 751       | Kilmaurs.                                     |
| 1909  | 181                         | ..           | 23        | Prestwick.                                    |
| 1910  | 196                         | ..           | 932       | Newmilns.                                     |
| 1911  | 202                         | 109          | ..        | Burnbank, after play-off<br>with St. Vincent. |

## CHAPTER IV

### THE RULING ELDERS

James Brown, of Sanquhar—Founding of the Scottish B.A.—Revision of the Laws—Andrew H. Hamilton—The London and Southern Counties B.A.—Ernest C. Price—The Midland Counties B.A.—Bowlers of the Border—John Young and Charles Wood—The Imperial B.A.—The Australia Cup—The New English B.A.—Old-Style Clubs, Archaic Codes, and Poor Greens—The Irish B.A.—John C. Hunter—The Welsh B.A.

MITCHELL'S laws remained unaltered during his lifetime. They had always been deemed faulty in expression, were not free from opinionativeness, in some points confused the essential and the non-essential, and, of course, could not have provided for difficulties that did not arise until the potentialities of the game were realised. Still, his code had not been gravely affected by the passing years and offered a sound basis for further enactments.

On the initiative of James Brown, of Sanquhar, and James Pretsell, of Edinburgh, a conference of Bowlers was convened in Glasgow in September, 1892, and, without flourish of trumpet, created the Scottish

Bowling Association, which is to Bowls what the M.C.C. is to cricket and the Royal and Ancient of St. Andrews to golf. One of the earliest and most anxious tasks of the new body was to promulgate a revised, amended and enlarged version of the statutes on April 24th, 1893. It was a manifest advance upon Mitchell's pioneer labours, but not beyond improvement. In some things the fresh legislators had been timid and conservative, and in others had revealed a regard for legality, as such, which savoured of pedantry.

In 1895 the S.B.A. sustained a serious loss, for in that year James Brown, its first secretary, emigrated to Canada, settling at Montreal, where his knowledge of the green and the game proved of great value to the Bowlers of the Dominion, and where he died in 1904, whilst watching a match at curling. Before leaving his native shores, he had borne a prominent part in establishing the Rink and Single-handed Championships of Scotland, which constitute, on its practical side, two of the most important functions of the Association.

Happily the Association discovered in Mr. Andrew H. Hamilton, S.S.C., a worthy successor. A man of resource and method and a very demon for work, his professional attainments rendered him an ideal secretary, while his charming disposition and urbane demeanour

endeared him to all who had official relations with him. An admirable Bowler and a member of a Club (Lutton Place) that delighted in playing on an irreproachable green—and would tolerate none other,—the intrinsic merits of the pastime found in him a zealous and instructed advocate.

After settling down to his duties Hamilton arranged for an additional Rink competition annually. This became known as the Richardson Trophy, after the donor, Mr. J. B. Richardson, of Pitgorno, Stirlingshire, and was first held in 1900.

Examining the results of the three competitions since they were started, it looks at first sight as if the West of Scotland turned out finer players than the East does. But such difference as there is vanishes when viewed in the light of the formula which the Great Macdermott, of music-hall memory, applied to a momentous political crisis, for then we shall recognise that, in the West, “they’ve got the greens, they’ve got the men, and they’ve got the money, too.” The denser population naturally yields a larger supply of material, raw and other—chiefly other.

Though Bowlers in the rest of the United Kingdom were slow to organise on national lines, several Associations controlling more or less local areas were instituted in the last

decade of the 19th century. One of the most influential, the London and Southern Counties B.A. (1895), was largely the outcome of the perseverance of Mr. Ernest C. Price, F.C.A., of the Brownswood B.C., afterwards Mayor of Stoke Newington, whose services to Bowls in the South of England were inestimable. Indeed, to the enlightened devotion of the members of this Association—whose Hon. Secretary, Mr. D. Rice Thomas, is a man of all-round capacity,—was due the astounding revival of Bowls throughout the metropolitan area and the Home Counties and even the lands beyond.

Among the annual contests promoted by the London and Southern Counties B.A. are the Gold Badge (Single-handed) and the Silver Challenge Shield (in which competing clubs are each represented by four rinks, two playing at home and two on their opponents' greens). More important, in its bearing on the fortunes of the game, is the annual match between English and Scots Bowlers belonging to affiliated clubs. Nothing could testify more convincingly to the keenness and zest with which Bowls is practised in the belated South, than the fact that the English won four of the first seven of these contests (that is, from 1905, the inaugural year, to 1911).

From its inception the Midland Counties B.A.



(1895) was sustained by the zeal of a body of stalwarts, headed by Mr. Ezra Pickard, Mr. F. W. Kemp, and Mr. F. W. Lilburn, the last named for many years its ever-assiduous Hon. Secretary. Besides such annual competitions as the Midland Counties Challenge Cup and the Single-handed Tournament, it meets the London and Southern Counties B.A. in battle array—half played in Leicester and half in London on the same day,—and though the Southerners usually prevail, the encounter has lent an appreciable impetus to the spread of the game throughout the shires of Leicester, Northampton, and Bedford.

No Bowlers in the world are shrewder in play or heartier in enjoyment of it than are the Bowlers of the English Border. A large infusion of Scotsmen in the ranks of the leading clubs is inevitable, and this element doubtless tends to keep up the *esprit de corps* to the highest level. Greater exponents of the art of skipping have never trod the turf (in rubber soles) than James Telford, of Newcastle, and William Johnson, of Carlisle, and Bowlers of a younger day, like J. W. Dick, of Gosforth, J. S. Emmerson, of Carlisle Edenside, G. G. Brough, of Carlisle Subscription, and C. L. Cummings, of Sunderland Ashbrooke, carry on the tradition, if with less hilarity, certainly with no less skill and success.

Mainly at the suggestion of Alderman John Young, of Sydney, President of the New South Wales B.A.—the father of the game in the Commonwealth—and Mr. Charles Wood, of Melbourne, President of the Victoria B.A., the Imperial B.A. was founded in 1899, with the object of arranging matches between clubs of the Mother Country and those in Greater Britain. The Earl of Jersey was elected President and Mr. Ernest C. Price, Hon. Secretary. The new organisation accordingly advised and organised the English matches, in 1901, for the first accredited team of Australian Bowlers that ever visited the United Kingdom. Before sailing homewards, Mr. Wood presented to the I.B.A. a handsome silver trophy as a souvenir of the Colonial tour. The Association decided that the Cup should be styled the Australia Cup; that competing clubs should each enter four rinks, each rink to be drawn against a rink of another club; that all games should be played on one day on neutral greens; and that the Cup should be retained for one year by the club whose four rinks collectively had scored the highest number of points in excess of those scored by their opponents. The first four contests were conducted on this principle, which ensures an extremely exciting struggle, the winners being Valentines Park, Ilford (1902),

Abbey Park, Leicester (1903), Herne Hill, London (1904), and Valentines Park, Ilford (1905).

When, in 1903, a number of Bowlers, under the leadership of William Gilbert Grace, the celebrated cricketer, started an English Bowling Association, not unnaturally the Associations which had borne the burden and heat of the day and had kept the game alive when its fortunes were at lowest ebb, resented an innovation of such magnitude without their knowledge and consent. Chaos seemed come again, and clubs and Bowlers deplored the existence of several independent organisations claiming equal weight and jurisdiction. Ultimately "sweet reasonableness" assumed the upper hand and, in the interests of peace and order, at a joint-gathering of the two bodies it was determined (November 13th, 1905) that both the Imperial and the then English Bowling Associations should be amalgamated, and a fresh constitution and rules were drafted for the reconstructed English B.A. Nothing in the life of the I.B.A. became it like the leaving it. At its invitation a team of representative Bowlers from Canada had conducted an immensely popular campaign throughout the United Kingdom in 1904, and, *in articulo mortis*, it handed over to the new E.B.A. the sole and complete control of the



ERNEST CHARLES PRICE, F.C.A.,  
FIRST PRESIDENT, LONDON AND SOUTHERN COUNTIES B.A. (*See f. 53.*)

*(From a Photograph by Martin & Sander, Stoke Newington, N.)*



Australia Cup. Through its successful efforts in bringing together Bowlers from the remotest quarters of the British Empire, the Imperial Bowling Association had amply justified its existence and added a long and unique chapter to the history of the game.

Frankly adopting the Scottish laws, the E.B.A. addressed itself to the twofold duty of organisation and propagandism. The work threatened to be arduous, but the invincible optimism of the Hon. Secretary, Mr. Thomas Baines (appointed in 1907), was equal to the uphill task. The trouble was to overcome the inertia, engendered by years of *laissez-faire*, of the smaller clubs, especially in outlying districts. Many did not take themselves very seriously, and some attached almost as much importance to liquid refreshments as to the pastime. In a number of cases the greens were poor. Not that they were neglected, so far as rolling and cutting went, but that they were made of meadow grass, the wear and tear of which were left to Nature's cure, and were often so small that play took place from corner to corner and not up and down.

Moreover, there was quite a pleasing variety in the methods of play. Unenlightened London—that is, the clubs other than those which had splendid greens—had one code, East Anglia another, Devon and the South-



West a third, and so on. The rink or Scottish game was, in the vast majority of instances, an interloper. What was good enough for their fathers was good enough for them : why should they change ? But surely, if slowly, they began to change. The English instinct for sport saw that there *was* another side to the question even of playing Bowls. Where it was really impossible to re-lay a green for want of room or lack of money, committees were induced to spend more care upon their greens and to effect repairs with the best turf available. Some clubs bravely faced the cost and commissioned contractors to lay down new greens, and this course was almost invariably followed by new clubs which were formed in ever-increasing numbers. For when Bowlers realised that the game had become as thoroughly regularised as golf and cricket, they saw that it was no haphazard recreation for a Bank Holiday or a Saturday afternoon at a suburban tavern, but just as worthy of being methodically and constantly pursued for its own sake as was any of the other great summer games. Then when a club had built a full-sized green of the best quality, or improved its old lawn "out of all knowledge," its members were readily induced to abandon the antiquated methods of playing two or three men a-side and to take up the rink game.

In England clubs must, in the long run, be organised county by county, a reform which was systematically started in 1911. The shire is the obvious unit and the clubs within the shire will constitute a county association. The three estates of the Bowling realm will then comprise (*a*) the club, (*b*) the group of clubs, or county association, and (*c*) the E.B.A., composed of representatives from the county associations. If the English B.A. possess the necessary architectonic quality, this is the ideal structure it will rear.

It would seem almost as if Bowls were "forbid by law to grow on Irish ground," since the game has been so slow to strike root in the distressful country. Even in Ulster, largely colonised as it was and is by Scotsmen, the pastime has had a chequered existence. Still, since the dawn of the 20th century it has given decided signs of vitality not only in the province but in the capital itself. One club—the Belfast, founded in 1842—enjoys the rare honour of preserving Bowls from utter extinction in Ireland. Badgered by the builders, it was compelled to lay four separate greens—each, with a pavilion, at a cost of £600 or £700—before it found a resting-place from which it can never be dislodged, near the Royal Botanic Gardens. At one crisis, it appeared as if its last hour had struck, but a

gallant remnant, setting a "stout heart to a stey brae," resolved to hold on at all hazards.

Needless to say of a club with such a history, its players were all marked men. Memories as green as the shamrock are still cherished of the exploits of some of its old skips, like Robert Andrews, John Rose, Joe M'Cready, Andrew Gibson, and John C. Hunter. Gibson was a perfect terror and many a Scots team of prowess undoubted sailed back to the Land o' Cakes to tell how Dandie and his men had downed them. But Andrew, like Hunter, was a Scot. The latter, a native of Kilbarchan, in Renfrewshire, was a Bowler from boyhood, having played his first game at the age of thirteen. Crossing the water, he joined the Belfast B.C., of which he was a member for upwards of thirty-two years, until, in fact, he returned in 1910 to his native place, after a service to the game of more than half a century. Hunter was one of the safest Bowlers Scotland ever produced and had few equals as a skip. As a man he was geniality itself, a peacemaker always, the friend of the friendless, and an ornament of that game which appeared to be both meat and drink to him. His retirement might have entailed serious injury to his club, had he not remained to see it prosperously settled in a permanent home, where it seeks fresh laurels.

If missionary zeal inspire the Irish Bowling Association, founded in 1904, it has a unique opportunity. All Ireland is its field. Having won the international matches at Cardiff in 1905, it lacks neither prestige nor workers. Nor could intending Bowlers wish for better greens, as models, than those of the Belfast and Belmont clubs and that in Ormeau Park (all in Belfast), or that in Coleraine, or that of the Kenilworth B.C. in Dublin. And, example being better than precept, no more accomplished exponents could be desired than William McLetchie, David W. Barnett, Dr. J. R. Davison, Dr. J. Rusk, the Forsythe brothers, J. Pollock of Ballynafeigh (whose nonchalance is often deadlier than another's grim determination), Samuel Windrim, and William Lindsay.

Upon the Bowlers of "gallant little Wales" lies a responsibility similar in character to, though differing in degree from that which rests upon their Irish brethren. Her opportunities are fewer because her area is smaller. When the Welsh Bowling Association was formed in 1904, the number of clubs of any standing might be counted on the digits of one hand. The Cardiff B.C. (1878)—the premier club—and the Mackintosh B.C. (1877), both belonging to Cardiff, would carry weight in any country in respect of their wealth of players

of proved capacity. Dash and daring are perhaps the qualities that most impress one in Welsh play. Every man is a "trier," and the performances of the international teams invariably arouse the spectators' admiration. As in the case of Ireland, the Welshmen recognise only the Scottish code, and, owing to the excellence of their greens, have always appreciated the subtlety and strategy of the rink game.

In the Principality Bowls owed much to the all-round skill of John Pollock who, leaving his native Scotland early in life, settled in Cardiff and found in Bowls ample consolation for his exile. In the international matches at Edinburgh in 1908 only two skips were "up" in all their games, and Pollock was one of them, his play throughout being a fine exhibition of generalship. Of other Welsh skips mention may be made of David Davies (Cardiff B.C.), whose play was sometimes dazzling in its brilliancy; W. A. Cole and F. W. Thomas (both of the Mackintosh B.C.), who, while running no foolhardy risks, always meant business and, more often than not, "got home"; the Rev. T. J. Jones (Penylan B.C.), who, quite early in his career, proved himself a master tactician; and David Wilkinson (Dinas Powis B.C.), an extraordinarily hard worker, whose defeat of the renowned Edinburgh skip, George

Snedden, at Belfast in 1910 was one of the surprises of the international match. Owing to the personal enthusiasm of such men as Edward Lloyd, Robert Graham, W. A. Morgan, and H. A. Keenor, the organisation of Bowls speedily reached an exceptionally fit condition in Wales ; and the Welsh B.A., with a view still further to arouse and stimulate interest in the game, extended its patronage to the Welsh Open Championship, an annual fixture, which was first held in 1907. Considering their numbers, Welsh Bowlers have achieved wonders and will never eat the leek.



## CHAPTER V

### “ADVANCE, AUSTRALIA!”

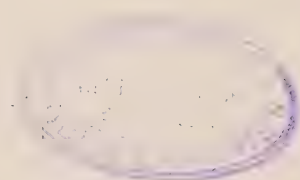
Bowls in Greater Britain—The New South Wales B.A. and Victoria B.A.—Where Australian practice differs from the Scottish—Inter-State matches—Visit of the Australian Team to the Mother Country in 1901—Match with the Brownswood B.C.—Colonial fondness for Legality—“Baby” Jacks—Driving Skips and their risks—Colonial opinion of British greens—Scottish customs considered—Charles Wood’s luck—Australian greens—The Danger Ahead.

WHEREVER the Scot wanders he tries his hardest to settle and takes with him—besides his trade and his brains—his Bible, his Bowls, and his Burns. When he has found his feet, as well as a few brither Scots (not too few, either, be sure of that!), his early concern is to lay a Bowling green. And so in quick time the game spreads, and new chums try their ’prentice hand and write to Glasgow, or Edinburgh, or London, for a supply of bowls, the coming of which is awaited with an impatience like that of the panting hart for cooling streams. Thus came it to pass that in the Commonwealth of Australia and the Dominions



THE LATE ALDERMAN JOHN YOUNG, J.P., SYDNEY,  
THE "FATHER" OF BOWLS IN THE COMMONWEALTH. (See p. 55.)

*(From the Portrait in the "New South Wales Bowlers' Annual, 1906,"  
Published by Batson & Co. Ltd., Sydney.)*



of Canada and New Zealand Bowls carries the palm as a summer pastime.

And they could organise, too, going ahead where their brethren in "puir auld Scotland" feared to tread, the New South Wales B.A. and the Victoria B.A. dating from 1880. Nor are Australian variants on Scottish practice of vital importance. They accept a minimum rink width of eighteen instead of nineteen feet; they depute to the third men the duty of measuring, which is unassigned in the Scots laws, but is generally undertaken or supervised by the skips; in following up, the player must not approach within two yards of the rolling bowl; the first three players on each side remain behind the mat until the third men have delivered their last bowls, when all six change places with the skips, in marked contrast with the slovenliness of the Scots habit; they prefer a mat large enough (two feet by two feet six inches) to save the green from damage in the act of launching a bowl.

No sooner had the two Associations been established than inter-State (in those days inter-Colonial) matches were arranged. In 1880 and 1881 the home and away games were played in the same year. Then after being held at Sydney and Melbourne in alternate years, the original custom was reverted to.

mixed-length jacks should be more general in both hemispheres.

Fondness for “riding” bowls—the “skittles” of irreverent and ignorant bystanders—is a peculiarity of Australian skips. Sometimes this is the only scientific shot possible. Many an English driver—for the Scots skip is seldom loth—is deterred from attempting it through dread of the chaff and ridicule of the banks. The Colonial skip, accustomed to big galleries, has plenty of nerve and plays the absolutely correct game at a given juncture. True, he must have an eye like a hawk’s. There is a touch of pathos sometimes in the warning cry, with a note, maybe, of deprecation, “Mind, we have no back timber, Jim !” But if there be no back bowls, the skip should not “ride.” For the secret of driving consists in knowing *when not to do it*.

Reviewing the Colonial tour, it must be said that, in spite of such difficulties as the varying qualities of the greens, the daily travelling and sightseeing, and the round of banquets and other entertainments, the Australians quitted themselves like men. They played altogether twenty-two representative matches—ten in England, ten in Scotland, and two in Ireland. Of these they won eleven, lost ten, and drew one. They were defeated by Brownswood (111–89) and Bounds Green (97–69),

both in the north of London. These disasters had a tonic effect, for they won their next five matches "off the reel" (Brighton, 80-76; Chichester, 127-93; Southampton County, 87-73; Reading, 109-79; and Cheltenham, 130-50). This last, showing a margin of 80 shots, was their most brilliant achievement. Then ensued a soberising influence, for they went down at Leicester (97-91) and Newcastle-on-Tyne (102-76).

Crossing the Cheviots, they began by drubbing the Border boys at Hawick (97-76), but Hope told a flattering tale, for at Galashiels they sustained their heaviest reverse, the "braw, braw lads of Gala Water" beating them by 30 shots (91-61). They saw both the smiling and frowning of Fortune at Edinburgh, for they thrashed Braid (89-75) and Luton Place thrashed them (90-74). At the fair city of Perth they managed to get home by a single shot (77-76), but in Glasgow were roughly handled by Bellahouston (96-70) and Wellcroft (83-62). Kilmarnock—"Auld Killie," shade of Burns!—found them somewhat too strong (82-74), but "Tam o' Shanter" and "The Cotter" were avenged at Ayr (108-79), and Maxwelltown also proved unkind (86-76).

Their two Irish matches were both played at Belfast, where they defeated Ormeau (82-68) and tied with Ulster at 94 all.



The tour closed with a victory at Bromley, where the men of Kent were handsomely trounced (89-61). Seeing that they had begun with two defeats in London, there was compensation in rounding off their campaign with a substantial victory on a metropolitan green.

Before they went home the Australians expressed their views about the game as played in the old country. They had had exceptional facilities for forming opinions after playing for a whole season upon greens of varying quality against teams of varying calibre. Words failed them in praise of the greens in Scotland, but—with several outstanding exceptions, where the greens were not a whit inferior to the Scottish average—the English greens were condemned as “unplayable,” “very rough,” “against the bias,” “unreliable,” “not true,” and “tricky.” (Since the date of the Australians’ visit, however, most of the greens which were animadverted on have been vastly improved.)

As to the character of the play, the Australians considered that Scottish Bowlers exhibited the soundest generalship and possessed the most perfect knowledge of the game, but their methods were very irritating. The dilatoriness of the Scots would, they avowed, have tried Job himself beyond endurance, while their habit of capering up the green after their

bowl was extremely tiresome. Indeed, in some cases these antics put the Colonials off their game. The repeated consultations between the skip and his men, the going up to the head to see how the woods lay before playing—"as if the Bowler wanted to photograph every end,"—and their generally "daidling" deportment, were features of the Scotsmen's play which the Australians deemed annoying, apart from the wilful waste of time.

Being sportsmen, however, the Australians only asked for a fair green and no favour. As to luck, it is worth while to recall an experience of Charles Wood's. He was skipping against a man who was "on the grizzle" throughout the game, because he was losing. He kept grumbling especially about Wood's luck. But the game came to an end at last. Then an old gentleman who had followed it with keen interest (and had heard more than was supposed) rose from his seat on the bank and tendered this shrewd comment—"I have been watching your game, gentlemen, and it seems to me that the best player has the best luck."

Australian greens differ according to the grass. In West Australia and South Australia couch predominates and furnishes a somewhat coarser green. The scarcity of water in certain parts of these States entails heavy expenditure. In the area of the goldfields—as at Kalgoorlie,

Coolgardie, and Boulder—the supply comes from sources several miles distant. In Victoria and New South Wales there is less couch and, to the eye at any rate, little to choose between the turf of the best greens and that cut from the Solway shores. In New Zealand, where the game is played with as much zeal as in the Commonwealth, there are admirable greens at New Plymouth, Auckland, and Wellington (North Island), and at Dunedin, Kaituma and Christchurch (South Island). Tasmanian greens are perhaps a trifle rougher, but the lawns in Hobart and Launceston are unexceptionable.

Against one serious danger the Colonials must be warned. In many places the game is pursued amidst luxurious surroundings. Besides laying down (as is most commendable) excellent greens, each costing several hundreds of pounds, some clubs have yielded to the temptation to build commodious and well-appointed clubhouses at an outlay of £2000 or £3000 and upwards. Lavish expenditure upon “ swagger ” premises—which, however desirable, are not necessary—involves large entrance fees and annual subscriptions, in addition to frequent “ calls,” and, commonly, an increase in the cost of management. Every club that approves of a policy which is often both wasteful and demoralising is unconsciously jeopardising the most cherished social attributes

of Bowls. Bowlers will rue the day they sanction extravagant expenditure in connection with the pursuit of their game, for, most assuredly, the next step will open wide the door to class distinction and class sentiment.

## CHAPTER VI

### “THE MAPLE LEAF FOR EVER!”

Bowls in Nova Scotia—The Duke of Kent's green—The Ontario Associations—Peculiarities of the Canadian code—The Canadian handicap—Play by electric light—Westmount Green, Montreal—Canadians in the Mother Country, 1904—Address-albums—A team of Trojans visits Canada, 1906—Canadians challenge the United Kingdom—Their tour in 1908—Dr. J. W. Edgar's skipping—The British Team of 1910—Advantages of the tours in both Worlds.

IN British North America Bowls first saw the light in Nova Scotia. In 1734 an enclosure was reserved as a green for the officers of the garrison of Annapolis (Port Royal), while the Duke of Kent, the grandfather of King Edward VII., had a green laid down in his grounds at Prince's Lodge, Bedford Basin, Halifax, the game then being popular in the provincial capital.

These, however, were isolated instances, more than a century lapsing before a preconcerted effort was made to establish Bowls in Canada. The people of Quebec, predominantly of French blood, have never shown any

*penchant* for the pastime, though in Montreal and the vicinity the rink game is firmly rooted. But in Ontario its interests are controlled and safeguarded by the Ontario (1888) and Western Ontario (1896) Bowling Associations.

Save in three particulars Canadian Bowlers accept the Scottish laws. In the first place, instead of a real ditch round the green, a space about fifteen inches wide between parallel whitewashed lines, is marked off at each extremity of the field of play ; secondly, on some greens the rinks are not much more than ten feet wide, a condition obviously tending to overcrowding ; and thirdly, when the jack is driven across the side boundary into another rink, it is still alive and the end must be completed. As to the first feature, clubs that adopt the Scots statutes should surround their greens with the shallow ditch which, indeed, is almost necessitated by the doctrine of "touchers." The second feature is palpably indefensible. In respect of the third, it occasions such constant inconvenience that it is singular the Canadians should ever have substituted it for the Scottish practice, according to which such a jack is dead and the end must be started afresh.

It is due to the Canadians to state that they waived their rule about the jack when the captain of the British team in 1910 pointed



out its practical difficulties. In their interpretation of the ditch rule, they hold that unless the bowl is absolutely clear of the confining whitewash lines it shall not be considered as a "ditcher"; in other words, if any portion rest on either line it is a dead wood. Of course, a "ditch" like that often gives rise to doubt, especially on the part of those unaccustomed to it. Even a little "give and take" is plainly undesirable in matches, which should be governed by laws so clear as, so to speak, to explain themselves. This being so, on greens without proper ditches it would be more satisfactory to ignore "touchers" altogether than run the risk of unpleasantness and grievance.

On the whole, the Bowlers of the Dominion are somewhat lacking in the keenness and resource which characterise those of the Commonwealth. This is readily explained by the difference of climate, which shortens the season, restricts opportunity for practice, and interferes with improvement of the greens. In these respects the Canadians are heavily handicapped. We may develop the argument to its full logical extent and say that the supremacy of Scottish Bowlers lies in the very fact that they make their game from youth upwards upon greens in the pink of condition.

For three reasons Canadian greens are never

likely to be as good as the best examples in the United Kingdom. The winter is severe and generally the frost has penetrated to a considerable depth, before the ground has been covered with a thick blanket of snow. Then when springtime comes the frost does not leave the greens, or even all parts of the same green, equally, and unevenness of surface is inevitable. Intense summer heat follows and bakes the soil, the top becomes pulverised, and the roots of the grass have no chance of spreading their fibres on the surface. These two causes are climatic and it is hard to see how they can be coped with. The third adverse reason, however, is artificial and it rests with the Bowlers themselves whether or not it shall be remedied. Night play by electric light—which is installed on many greens—is extensively practised, and play goes on long after the turf has been saturated with the dews. Consequently, owing to play on the sodden turf, the hard-worked ends completely wear away. Upon greens exposed to such treatment a truly scientific game is difficult, if not impossible.

Incidentally, it may be noted that though the game is usually called Lawn Bowling in Canada, it is in every essential the British game of Bowls. During the nine years before his death James Brown, of Sanquhar, did much

to popularise the pastime and better the greens, and his son carried on the work thus zealously begun. The Westmount green at Montreal, the green in which the Browns were particularly interested, was the only green on which the British team of 1906 played that had been constructed with surrounding banks and ditches. But this notwithstanding, owing to the severity of the preceding winter, they found the green uneven and the grass longer and coarser than they had been used to.

In the summer of 1903 the Imperial B.A. invited the Ontario B.A. to a series of matches between a representative team from Canada and certain clubs in the Mother Country, and this tour became the feature of the Bowling world in 1904. Although the result of the campaign was disappointing to the Canadians, for they went down upon green after green with somewhat painful monotony, they showed splendid pluck and took their "gruel" in the spirit of sportsmen. They were skilfully captained by Mr. George Anderson, of Prospect Park B.C., one of the foremost men in Toronto, who had fostered the game in Ontario with vigilance and devotion, and Mr. A. S. Wigmore, an accomplished member of Victoria B.C., Toronto, acted as Secretary and Manager.

It is noteworthy that the victories that fell to their lot were gained over such strong clubs

as Bounds Green (80-75), Cardiff (111-100), and Bromley, Kent (77-75). They tied with Combined Brighton at 102 all, while to Upper Clapton they succumbed only by a single shot (80-79), and to the Western League at Weston-super-Mare by two shots (93-91). In Scotland, albeit nonplussed by the unerring accuracy of draw which the turf allowed of, they enjoyed a succession of matches on greens of superlative excellence. And, after all, this experience recouped them for the severity of defeat. It was important to learn, by means of repeated games upon greens of the highest possible quality, both what a Bowling green was like and how it should be made and kept. The trip had been partly of an educational order and had not been taken in vain.

By a "happy thought," to borrow the phrase of Sir Frank Burnand, the Canadians commemorated their tour by presenting to the premier Associations in the old country—in the names of the different Honorary Secretaries—address-albums written with exquisite skill and charmingly decorated with appropriate original designs. These addresses were wholly executed by Miss Edith E. Shaw, of Toronto, whose craftsmanship, in respect of beauty of colour, sureness of drawing, and delicacy of touch and taste, recalled that of the old missalists and illuminators.

No time was lost in returning a visit. On July 21st, 1906, a British team sailed from Liverpool, under the captaincy of Samuel Fingland, of Broomhill B.C., Glasgow, with James Telford, of West End B.C., Newcastle, and John C. Hunter, of Belfast B.C., as lieutenants. It was a team of Trojans, and worked with more than Trojan ardour and a great deal more than Trojan success, as it swept onwards from victory to victory.

Twenty-three matches were played and the British won all but two. Really the visitors were defeated in four different games, but the whole day's play, no matter where it took place, constituted, in the official view, one match. They were beaten (August 8) by the Victoria and Thistle Clubs of Toronto, on the Victoria green (162-155), by the Mitchell Club (August 17) at Mitchell (63-50)—though winning on the day's games by three shots,—by the Goderich and Wingham Clubs (August 18) at Goderich (86-73), and by the Clinton, Seaforth and Wingham Clubs (August 18) at Clinton (76-74)—the last two counting as only one match.

Twice the British team smothered their opponents, being 123 "up" against the Royal Canadian Yacht and Caer Howell Clubs (212-89), on the green of the former at Toronto, and 109 "up" against the Hamilton Asylum,







GEORGE ANDERSON, OF PROSPECT PARK B.C., TORONTO,  
CAPTAIN OF THE CANADIAN TEAM  
THAT VISITED THE MOTHER COUNTRY IN 1904. (See p. 78 )

*(From a Photograph by Fraser's Studio, Toronto.)*

Dundas, Grimsby and Hamilton Yacht Clubs (221-112) at Hamilton, while in each of eleven other matches their majorities exceeded forty. In four several matches of eight rinks a-side, and in one of six rinks a-side, every British rink was "up." The British Bowlers scored a grand aggregate of 3965 shots and the Canadians 2878. The gross majority by which the visitors won all their ends was 1109, which, after deducting the majority of 22 by which they were defeated, yielded the extraordinary net majority of 1087 shots.

Though smitten hip and thigh by a team of stalwarts, the Canadians were by no means "downhearted," and a team of friendly invaders, twenty-eight strong, landed in England on July 3rd, 1908. Without exception, they hailed from clubs in the southern area of Ontario, the team being composed thus:—Toronto, 7; Hamilton, 3; Paris, 3; Tillsonburg, 2; Mitchell, 2; Brentford, 2; Stratford, 2; and one each from St. Catharines, Owen Sound, Ridgetown, Walkerville, Dumville, Harriston, and Acton. Most of them made the tour as Bowlers for the first time, but among the "old stagers" were such fine exponents of the game as George Anderson, of Toronto, Dr. James Russell, of Hamilton (the Captain), and Alexander Yule, of Harriston, whose energetic methods and cheery ways

never failed to promote the gaiety of the green, while in Franklin Smoke, of Paris, the players had an able and courteous Secretary.

"Hope," says Bacon, "is a good breakfast, but it is a bad supper," and, however confident they were when they reached the metropolis, the Canadians had an early opportunity of pondering the philosopher's apophthegm, for they suffered punishment in London by huge majorities. The results of their tour are set out in the accompanying table.

Their victories over such clubs as Southampton, Cardiff, Lanarkshire, Leith, and Perth, were "feathers in their caps," while they also lowered the colours of Brighton and Hove, Ballymena, and Coleraine. Though "a miss is as good as a mile," the narrow margins of their defeats by Newcastle, Carlisle, Bellahouston (Glasgow), Ayrshire and Belmont (Belfast), testified to the keenness of their play. The visitors took part in thirty-two matches, of which they won eight, and lost the rest. Their total score was 2506 shots against 2975 of their adversaries, showing a deficiency of 469 shots. They were 85 shots "up" in the matches they won and 554 "down" in their lost games, an adverse balance of 469.

Reasons for their downfall were not far to seek. Inexperience of greens of perfect quality

# ITINERARY AND SCORES OF CANADIAN BOWLERS' TOUR (1908).

| Date.                          | Club.                                   | Score. |          | Up. | Down. |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------|----------|-----|-------|
|                                |                                         | For.   | Against. |     |       |
| July 4                         | Leicester . . . .                       | 99     | 113      | ..  | 14    |
| " 6                            | South London . . . .                    | 72     | 130      | ..  | 58    |
| " 7                            | Bounds Green . . . .                    | 79     | 111      | ..  | 32    |
| " 8                            | Upper Clapton . . . .                   | 48     | 94       | ..  | 46    |
| " 10                           | Brownswood . . . .                      | 72     | 135      | ..  | 63    |
| " 11                           | Brighton and Hove . . . .               | 109    | 102      | 7   | ..    |
| " 13                           | Southampton . . . .                     | 104    | 83       | 21  | ..    |
| " 14                           | Reading . . . .                         | 68     | 80       | ..  | 12    |
| " 15                           | Banbury . . . .                         | 64     | 78       | ..  | 14    |
| " 17                           | Weston-super-Mare . . . .               | 48     | 60       | ..  | 12    |
| " 17                           | Newport . . . .                         | 63     | 81       | ..  | 18    |
| " 18                           | Mackintosh, Cardiff . . . .             | 99     | 114      | ..  | 15    |
| " 20                           | Cardiff . . . .                         | 105    | 97       | 8   | ..    |
| " 22                           | Newcastle-on-Tyne . . . .               | 87     | 95       | ..  | 8     |
| " 23                           | Carlisle . . . .                        | 104    | 106      | ..  | 2     |
| " 24                           | Directors of S.B.A., Edinburgh . . . .  | 62     | 78       | ..  | 16    |
| " 25                           | Edinburgh and Leith Association . . . . | 80     | 112      | ..  | 32    |
| " 27                           | Leith . . . .                           | 57     | 48       | 9   | ..    |
| " 28                           | Galashiels . . . .                      | 64     | 98       | ..  | 34    |
| " 29                           | Willowbank, Glasgow . . . .             | 62     | 93       | ..  | 31    |
| " 30                           | Bellahouston, Glasgow . . . .           | 74     | 76       | ..  | 2     |
| " 31                           | Coatbridge, Lanarkshire . . . .         | 100    | 95       | 5   | ..    |
| August 1                       | Stirling . . . .                        | 69     | 96       | ..  | 27    |
| " 3                            | Perth . . . .                           | 82     | 78       | 4   | ..    |
| " 4                            | Inverness . . . .                       | 75     | 88       | ..  | 13    |
| " 6                            | Aberdeen . . . .                        | 61     | 90       | ..  | 29    |
| " 7                            | Kirkcaldy . . . .                       | 85     | 120      | ..  | 35    |
| " 10                           | Ayrshire . . . .                        | 78     | 85       | ..  | 7     |
| " 13                           | Belfast . . . .                         | 88     | 113      | ..  | 25    |
| " 14                           | Belmont, Belfast . . . .                | 83     | 92       | ..  | 9     |
| " 15                           | Ballymena . . . .                       | 89     | 61       | 28  | ..    |
| " 17                           | Coleraine . . . .                       | 76     | 73       | 3   | ..    |
| GRAND TOTALS . . . .           |                                         | 2506   | 2975     | 85  | 554   |
| Deduct Canada . . . .          |                                         |        | 2506     |     | 85    |
| Balance against Canada . . . . |                                         |        | 469      |     | 469   |

repeatedly showed them at fault in timing the pace of the pitch, whilst they constantly overlooked the fact that a full-sized green enabled a much longer jack to be thrown than what they were accustomed to at home. Therefore, when it became necessary to play to a long jack, they were mostly much too short, or much too narrow, or much too strong. *Per contra*, it was to the "baby" jack—the length almost invariably thrown by their leaders—they owed most of their successes. It was curious that both the Australians and Canadians affected, too exclusively, play to short jacks; and, of course, it followed that the ill-advised habit spelled disaster to both. Their policy could only be justified by ability to keep the jack, and this they failed to do. The team was exceptionally well served in the matter of skips. Dr. J. W. Edgar, of Hamilton, displayed positively brilliant form, holding his own, as a rule, against the most redoubtable drivers in the Mother Country, and A. Gemmell, of Toronto, F. Smoke, of Paris, and S. Bawden, of Ridgetown, were also seen to advantage.

Sweet, however, are the uses of adversity, and the stern and strict drill of discipline had been silently at work for the good of the Canadians. In 1910 another team from the Homeland visited Canada, at the invitation of the Ontario and West Ontario Bowling Associa-

tions. It was a smaller company designedly, because it had been proved that eight rinks crowded the greens inconveniently, and yet

### ITINERARY AND SCORES OF BRITISH BOWLERS' TOUR (1910).

| Date.                    | Place.         | Clubs.                                     | Score. |          | Up. | Down. |
|--------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------------|--------|----------|-----|-------|
|                          |                |                                            | For.   | Against. |     |       |
| August 20                | Montreal       | Westmount and Mont-<br>real A.A.A. . . .   | 90     | 77       | 13  | ..    |
| " 22                     | Ottawa         | Vittoria and Civil Service                 | 61     | 53       | 8   | ..    |
| " 22                     | "              | Brockville and Prestcott .                 | 86     | 63       | 23  | ..    |
| " 23                     | Peterborough   | Peterborough . . .                         | 82     | 84       | ..  | 2     |
| " 25                     | Toronto        | Alexandra . . .                            | 62     | 69       | ..  | 7     |
| " 25                     | "              | Granite . . .                              | 75     | 84       | ..  | 9     |
| " 26                     | "              | Royal Canadian Yacht .                     | 86     | 58       | 28  | ..    |
| " 27                     | "              | Victoria . . .                             | 73     | 84       | ..  | 11    |
| " 27                     | "              | St. Matthew's . . .                        | 77     | 72       | 5   | ..    |
| " 29                     | "              | Canada . . .                               | 78     | 77       | 1   | ..    |
| " 31                     | St. Catharines | St. Catharines . . .                       | 85     | 67       | 18  | ..    |
| September 1              | Hamilton       | Hamilton Thistle . . .                     | 77     | 72       | 5   | ..    |
| " 2                      | "              | Fernleigh and Victoria .                   | 72     | 73       | ..  | 1     |
| " 3                      | Brantford      | Brantford and Heather .                    | 96     | 69       | 27  | ..    |
| " 6                      | Paris          | Paris and Tillsonburg .                    | 87     | 69       | 18  | ..    |
| " 7                      | London         | London . . .                               | 69     | 91       | ..  | 22    |
| " 7                      | "              | London Thistle . . .                       | 90     | 63       | 27  | ..    |
| " 8                      | Petrolia       | Petrolia and Sarnia .                      | 100    | 49       | 51  | ..    |
| " 9                      | Windsor        | Windsor, Walkerville,<br>and Detroit . . . | 89     | 64       | 25  | ..    |
| " 12                     | Clinton        | Clinton . . .                              | 86     | 83       | 3   | ..    |
| " 13                     | Stratford      | Stratford . . .                            | 120    | 85       | 35  | ..    |
| " 14                     | Berlin         | Berlin and Waterloo .                      | 98     | 66       | 32  | ..    |
| " 16                     | Owen Sound     | Owen Sound and Wiarton                     | 85     | 73       | 12  | ..    |
| GRAND TOTALS .           |                |                                            | 1,924  | 1,645    | 331 | 52    |
| Deduct Canada .          |                |                                            | 1,645  |          | 52  |       |
| Balance against Canada . |                |                                            | 279    |          | 279 |       |

there was the constant temptation to give as many of the guests as possible a game. James T. Morrison, of Coatbridge B.C., was appointed Captain, and a more fitting choice could not have been made, as he was an organiser of



victory of proved capacity and resource, as had been demonstrated over and over again by his efficient management of the great yearly contests between Glasgow and Lanarkshire. Ezra Pickard, the veteran enthusiast of Leicester B.C., freshly crowned with the laurels of the Midland Counties Championship, was selected as Vice-Captain.

All the matches were played in rinks of four a-side, barring that at Stratford in which each team furnished five rinks. In the circumstances comparison with the results of the 1906 tour would be entirely misleading. But examination of the table (p. 85) of the matches and scores of both teams discloses the fact that the visitors had to meet Bowlers whose match-play, as we have hinted, had vastly improved in the interval.

Of the twenty-three matches the British won seventeen and lost six. In the games with the Royal Canadian Yacht Club, St. Catharines, and Petrolia and Sarnia, all the four visiting skips were "up" on their opponents. But the policy of playing two matches on one day was dubious. In the games against the Alexandra and Granite Clubs, the British team sustained a double reverse, and its defeat by the Victoria B.C. of Toronto—which also inflicted one of the defeats borne by the 1906 team—took place on another

two-match day. Obviously, the conditions were dead against the tourists, for while their opponents were fresh the British team had to do duty twice.

However, there could be no doubt but that the march of the ever-victorious army of 1906 had had a wonderful stimulus. "Wake up, Canada!" had been in effect its cry, and her Bowlers had responded with an advance that was almost "prodigious." Interest in Bowls had grown keener; individual play had decidedly improved; the greens were better cared for. Since most of the Bowlers are curlers also, eye and hand are kept in practice all the year round. Such training is bound to tell. The Bowling tours in Canada and the Mother Country fully realised the high and confident hopes cherished by those who were instrumental in bringing them to pass.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE INTERNATIONALS

The question of nationality—The Scot abroad—The whole-rink theory—Present mode of selection—Educational value of the matches—The campaign of 1908—Telford as *beau sabreur*—George Snedden's wonderful game at Cardiff in 1909—The Belfast meeting in 1910—Caruthers *versus* Macmillan—Dr. Robson pulverises the Midlanders—England on top in 1911—Scotland's *débâcle*—Wales's fine form—Ireland's hard luck—The white shoe nuisance—Objectionable chaff—Childish hilarity—Results of the matches from 1903 to 1911.

SINCE 1903 matches at Bowls have been held every year between Scotland, England, Ireland, and Wales, each country in turn furnishing the venue. Unfortunately, and especially in the beginning, the vital question of nationality was unceremoniously shelved, the English, Irish and Welsh teams being largely manned with Scottish Bowlers, on the transparent pretext that the clubs of which the Scotsmen were members were English, Irish, or Welsh, as the case might be. Though attempts have since been made to correct this hybridism, the Rose, the Shamrock, and the Leek have

always been represented by teams more or less vitiated in this respect. The fact that really brilliant play has been exhibited over and over again in these matches, only serves to throw into high relief the unpalatable truth that they lack the hallmark of genuine internationalism. It may be a hard saying but it were more profitable for England (for example), relying upon her own unaided efforts, to suffer defeat during a long series of years, to go through the furnace of trial, difficulty and despair, and so be drilled and disciplined into the resource, energy, and skill that lead to conquest, rather than snatch periodical victories by the help of Bowlers of other nationalities, whom one were loth to describe as the mercenaries of the game.

Nor is it possible to exonerate the Scot abroad. One cannot, of course, dogmatise on such matters as sentiment and patriotism, but it is difficult to understand how a Scotsman can think it a privilege or a duty to play against his native land, and even more difficult to know how he has convinced himself that thereby he is promoting the game of Bowls in England, Ireland, or Wales. I once heard W. G. Grace advance the plea that it would be a "national calamity" were our friend Tom Robertson, of the South London B.C., debarred from playing for England, in which country he

had learned Bowls. That missed the point. Nobody ever dreamt of excluding Mr. Robertson from international play: all that was urged was that his proper place was in the Scottish team. One knows that Scotsman very well by now who has learned his game in England (he who writes is an "awful example"); but is nothing to be said for the Englishman who is in like predicament? The question, however, is solving itself; for with an ever-growing number of Bowlers, natives of England, Ireland, and Wales worthy of their colours, it is becoming impracticable to tempt Scotsmen—even as an act of friendship—to pass themselves off as Englishmen, Irishmen, or Welshmen.

Another bugbear at first turned upon the principle of selection, though here, too, the Scottish withers were unwrung. An international team comprises sixteen players and four reserves. How were the men to be picked? The choice might either be limited to a few Bowlers accustomed to play together, or twenty men might be called up from twenty different clubs—the mode preferred by the Scottish B.A. At the start the former method commended itself to the English B.A., with unhappy results. There is no special virtue in playing a rink of four men familiar with each other's play. A quartet at Bowls is not like

a quartet in chamber music. What is of supreme necessity to a rink is a general. Given a first-rate skip, supported by men worthy of their place in an international team, and a perfect green, and the rink will not play any the worse merely because they have never played together before.

Besides, it stands to reason that there is nothing in the whole-rink theory. Analyse the duties of the several players and this will be apparent. The leader has to play to the jack, and it is not until the bowls of both leaders have come to rest, if even then, that the capable skip will devise his plan for the finished head. Then his skill as a strategist will be called into action. If he be a man of resource, and control players absolutely loyal and ready to do whatever he bids them—it has already been postulated that they are worthy of their places,—it cannot matter a brass farthing whether or not he has met them before. It is because every end varies, never repeating itself in any respect whatever, that the whole-rink theory breaks down. If Bowls were merely a mechanical game, head after head being reproduced with wearisome monotony, the theory would be intelligible; but in that case the pastime itself would cease to attract, lacking as it plainly would the whole of the elements that render it a game of skill, the infinite



variety of which neither age can wither nor custom stale.

But in course of time selection on the more comprehensive plan was adopted by the English B.A. Every club in membership is invited to nominate a "crack" player, with an intimation of the place he usually fills in the rink. The effective working of this method, however, depends on the hearty co-operation of club committees, and in some cases these discharge their duties perfunctorily. Several of the strongest clubs in England never submit any name, while others take the singular view that the invitation affords them a suitable opportunity to pay a compliment to their president or other member, who is either a favourite for his personal qualities or has subscribed handsomely to the exchequer, without giving proper heed to the only factor of value, namely, his skill and nerve as a Bowler. If every committee nominated English-born players, solely in the interests of winning the match, England's prospect of frequent victory would become brighter.

Waiving the question of nationality and dismissing from notice the earlier games, in which the predominance of Scotsmen in all the teams rendered the contests worthless as criteria for comparing the skill of the Bowlers of the different nations, the later matches have

proved the most interesting functions of each passing season. The play, often intensely exciting, as a rule reaches a high standard, if occasionally descending, on the part of some "puir panic-stricken body," to a deplorably low level. From an educational standpoint, as illustrating both how to do it and how not to do it, the games possess unique value.

In the Braid matches at Edinburgh (1908) there was nothing more admirable than the beautiful precision with which the veteran John Forman, of the Edinburgh B.C., led, or the graceful accuracy of J. R. Chapman, of Sunderland, whose sureness as second rendered Robert Fenwick's, of Newcastle West End, lead exceptionally sound, since it was impossible that men so absolutely trustworthy should both fail to do what was needful.

It is in the art of skipping, however, that these internationals afford the most useful lessons, and at Edinburgh almost every variety of directing was exemplified. Thomas Muir, of Beith, was steady, safe, and sure, taking no risks, and winning all his games. Of a totally different school was James Telford, of Newcastle West End, keen, enthusiastic, and revelling in smashing up his opponents' compactly built heads. Riding shots are sometimes imperative, but to drive almost as it were by preference is truculent treatment of the

subtler and more delicate science of drawing. Yet it is "all in the game" and Telford had the confidence of the *beau sabreur* who, knowing that if he come to grief failure means ruin, is still prepared to run the hazard. With his white plume shining amidst the ranks of war, Telford always recalled to my mind the famous lines of James Graham, Marquis of Montrose :—

He either fears his fate too much,  
Or his deserts are small,  
That dares not put it to the touch  
To gain or lose it all.

Perhaps the outstanding feature of the Edinburgh meeting was the excellent form shown by Wales and Ireland. The struggle between the Ulstermen and the Cymri was conducted with refreshing keenness. With one end to go the score was level and the play of the two remaining skips—David Barnett, of Belmont B.C., Belfast, and John Pollock, of Cardiff B.C.—was watched with breathless excitement. Wales was lying shot when the turn of the drivers came. With his second bowl Pollock drew another shot, and then Barnett's nerve failing him at the critical moment, the Welsh gained the victory by the narrow margin of two shots.

Cardiff and Dinas Powis were selected as the venues of the international encounters in

1909. The meetings witnessed a Scottish triumph. Save in three games, in which they had to go all the way for victory, the Scotsmen overwhelmed their adversaries. Their conquest was a complete vindication of form, and their winning of every game constituted a brilliant record. George Snedden, of Lutton Place B.C., Edinburgh ; Hugh Young, of Wattfield B.C., Ayr ; John Somerville, of Whitevale B.C., Glasgow ; and John A. Macmillan, of Dumbarton B.C., were a quartet of skips of whom any country might be proud. The Scottish success was a magnificent demonstration of the art of drawing to the jack.

George Snedden's play was in itself a liberal education in Bowls, and in his match against David Barnett of Belfast, he surpassed himself. Of the twenty-one ends he won no fewer than fifteen, and, at the close, the score of his rink stood at 25 against Ireland's 6. He could do nothing wrong, and played throughout with the utmost deliberation, allowing nothing to put him out. He felt the weight and took the balance of every bowl before playing, and did not deliver it until he was quite satisfied that, in both particulars, it was adjusted to the task immediately before him. He did not play a single driving shot from first to last. When an Irishman lay on the jack, Snedden removed him, with a bowl of sufficient strength,

judged to a nicety, to dislodge him and take his place. For once Barnett, a first-class skip with plenty of nerve, was completely outgeneralled. Nor could either skip complain of his men. Snedden was finely supported by Alexander McIntyre, of Dunfermline B.C., as leader, James McKenzie, of Dunbar B.C., as second, and George Thomson, of Dean B.C., Edinburgh, as third; while in Barnett's rink these places were filled by G. W. Cooper, of Kenilworth B.C., Dublin, A. Dickson and Charles Murray, both of Belmont B.C.

Snedden's toughest tussle—that against an English rink skipped by Tom Robertson, of South London B.C.—might have been pre-arranged to illustrate my argument on nationality. Robertson's colleagues were James G. Carruthers, of Muswell Hill B.C.—one of the few Bowlers who can lead or skip with equal acceptance,—John Fingland, of Banbury B.C., as second, and George Muat, of South London B.C., as third. Here, surely, the very acme of irony was reached, when it was seen that Snedden's quartet were engaged in a life-or-death struggle with four Scotsmen, battling with might and main for the honour of England!

Of the Irish skips at this meeting Dr. J. R. Davison, of Ulster B.C., Belfast, played the strongest and most resourceful game, while





ALL-ENGLAND LAWN TENNIS: THE SOUTH LONDON BOWLING GREEN IN 1911. (See p. 99.)





Samuel Windrim, of Shaftesbury B.C., Belfast (ably supported in all his matches by William Lindsay, of Belfast B.C., as leader, H. Oliver, of Falls B.C., Belfast, as second, and A. Jamieson, of Belfast B.C., as third), put up a remarkably strong fight against John A. Macmillan, of Dumbarton B.C., who showed a pronounced tendency to carry driving beyond its legitimate province, almost losing his match in consequence (21-20).

Belfast was the scene of the international fixture in 1910, the greens of the Ulster and Belmont clubs being reserved for play. Though Scotland did not repeat her Cardiff exploit, she won all her matches and, for the fourth year in succession, carried off the championship. George Snedden, however, lost two of his games and drew the third. He was beaten by J. Pollock, of Ballynafeigh B.C., Belfast, on an exceedingly difficult rink of the Ulster green, and, in spite of a recovery worthy of his reputation, lost by two shots to David Wilkinson, of Dinas Powis B.C., who played this game in brilliant fashion. John A. Macmillan (Dumbarton) put wonted mettle into his encounters with David Barnett (Belmont), whom he defeated by 23 shots (32-9), and W. A. Cole (Mackintosh B.C., Cardiff), who fell by 11 shots (25-14). But he met his master in James G. Carruthers (Muswell Hill),

who beat him at his own game and whose dashing and adroit skipping was one of the delights of the meeting. At half-time the Scots led by three (10-7), but Carruthers won by eight shots (27-19). Time after time he picked out the Scottish shot by a well-directed drive and taught Macmillan that forcible tactics were not his monopoly. Dr. J. D. Robson, of Maxwelltown B.C., was somewhat slow in finding his game, being inclined at first to draw too narrowly on the fast greens, but as soon as he succeeded in timing the turf, he never looked backwards. The certainty with which he smashed up end after end simply flabbergasted the Midlanders, skipped by Owen McSally, of Leicester B.C., who fell by 28 shots (38-10). William Stevenson, of Motherwell B.C., won his three games, playing in beautifully safe and confident style throughout.

Says the Scots proverb, "A cock's aye crouse on his ain midden," and so, playing at home, both William McLetchie and David Barnett had field days against England and Wales. The former trounced the unhappy Midlanders, McSally still being the victim skip, while Barnett's play against David Wilkinson was deadly (34-9), and he also handled England under Carruthers somewhat heavily (26-13). Sam MacDonald, of Belfast B.C., gave Barnett a perfect lead and every skip knows what that

is worth. The Irish meeting was notable for the last appearance for the Emerald Isle of John C. Hunter, who played third to McLetchie and whose game was little short of marvellous in a veteran of more than half a century's practice.

In 1911 the internationals were played on the green of the South London B.C., Lyford Road, Wandsworth Common. Laid down in 1900 with turf from the Moray Firth, near Forres—described in one account of the meeting as a “splendid forest-turfed green!”—it was in admirable condition, despite the long-lasting drought of a summer which ultimately played havoc with many a green. For the first time in the history of Bowls the Lord Mayor, Sir T. Vezey Strong, officially welcomed all the teams to London, the cradle of the game, thus bringing related events of the 13th and 20th centuries into most interesting juxtaposition.

England's team had been distinctly strengthened for the fray, but its triumph was palpably due to the presence of James Gillespie Carruthers and Adam Adamson, of Finsbury Park B.C., both Scotsmen, who skipped with surpassing skill and judgment. Carruthers, indeed, went through the three days' struggle unscathed, being twelve “up” against Ireland, seven “up” against Wales, and one “up”

against Scotland, his generalship being ever alert and instructive. Adamson was four "up" against Wales and eight "up" against Scotland, the only two matches in which he was driver.

If all-round merit had been the test, Wales would have borne away the premier honours. Her men played with breezy zest and brilliant keenness. Of the skips the Rev. T. J. Jones, of Penylan B.C., though a Bowler of only four years' standing, showed strategy and capacity in play which would not have discredited a veteran. John Pollock, of Cardiff, outplayed his fellow-countryman Tom Harvey, of West Linton B.C., but did not relish the stubborn game of another brither Scot. Adamson usually had rather the better of Pollock, who is seen to least advantage when opposed to a skip who will hustle when hustled and always give at least as much as he gets.

Scotland never made a "puirer show" anywhere than she did in 1911. It had commonly been supposed she could have picked a good team almost blindfold, but this belief was pulverised for ever. There was too much new blood in her rinks. Of the eighteen men brought south, only five had done duty at Belfast, and, though others were not strange to international responsibility, even the strongest team could not stand so severe

a depletion. Indeed, it is essential that the *sequence of international experience* should not be unduly broken. As a precautionary measure, therefore, one half of any team should have done duty in the two preceding matches at least. Funereal gloom pervaded the Scotsmen's conflict with Wales; against Ireland they discovered, now and again, a touch of their customary skill and dash; but there was a woful want of staying power in the fight with England, on the result of which so much depended. Curiously enough, however, it was a freshman, W. Blythe, of Tulliallan B.C., who was *facile princeps*. His combat with Caruthers, heroically conducted on both sides, was followed with unbounded interest, and he made the shot of the gathering when, with his last bowl in an end against Ireland, he saved seven by "trailing" the jack. But that it should be left to a skip to save seven—excepting when the white has been carried, which was not the case in the instance under notice,—is inexcusable.

Though Ireland won the wooden spoon really there were few weaklings in her team. She missed the lovely lead of Sam MacDonald and the volcanic energy of David Barnett, who plays a winning game irresistibly and is always dangerous. On the other hand, the presence of Sam Windrim, who had the



“sweetest” delivery of any Bowler on the green, was all to the good. She had true and tried men in Dr. J. R. Davison, Dr. J. Rusk, J. Pollock, of Ballynaveigh, W. McLetchie, Andrew Jamieson, and William Lindsay, who spared not themselves to bring victory to Erin. Yet it was not to be !

Two abuses at international and, indeed, other fixtures are ripe for remedy. One is the wearing of white shoes, which are a perfect nuisance round the jack and constantly catch the Bowler’s “sight.” Another is the habit certain players affect of addressing jocular remarks and other cheap chaff to spectators on the banks, ostensibly intended to provoke laughter but really calculated to put *the players on the opposite side* off their game. In cricket, billiards, and other pastimes of the highest rank, that sort of thing is regarded as “bad form” and would not be tolerated: ’tis time it were stopped in Bowls. An English skip once wrote to me that when one hardened offender played, *his* skip had “as good as ten points the best of the game.”

One would not suppress every form of hilarity on the green, but the endless hand-shakings after every decent shot, as well as other capers, at last grow tedious and tiresome, and impress the onlookers as childish rather than funny and spontaneous.

# INTERNATIONAL RESULTS

103

## INTERNATIONAL RESULTS, 1903 TO 1911, IN ORDER OF MERIT

Two points allotted for a win. In 1903 England *v.* Scotland tied at 73 all. There has been no other case of a draw.

| Country.     | Won. | Lost. | Shots. |          | Margin. | Points. |
|--------------|------|-------|--------|----------|---------|---------|
|              |      |       | For.   | Against. |         |         |
| 1903.        |      |       |        |          |         |         |
| England . .  | 2    | 0     | 258    | 196      | + 62    | 5       |
| Scotland . . | 2    | 0     | 239    | 195      | + 44    | 5       |
| Ireland . .  | 1    | 2     | 209    | 220      | - 11    | 2       |
| Wales . .    | 0    | 3     | 181    | 276      | - 95    | 0       |
| 1904.        |      |       |        |          |         |         |
| Scotland . . | 3    | 0     | 275    | 200      | + 75    | 6       |
| England . .  | 2    | 1     | 265    | 215      | + 50    | 4       |
| Ireland . .  | 1    | 2     | 213    | 247      | - 34    | 2       |
| Wales . .    | 0    | 3     | 195    | 286      | - 91    | 0       |
| 1905.        |      |       |        |          |         |         |
| Ireland . .  | 2    | 1     | 244    | 219      | + 25    | 4       |
| Scotland . . | 2    | 1     | 245    | 228      | + 17    | 4       |
| England . .  | 1    | 2     | 232    | 213      | + 19    | 2       |
| Wales . .    | 1    | 2     | 201    | 262      | - 61    | 2       |
| 1906.        |      |       |        |          |         |         |
| England . .  | 3    | 0     | 262    | 209      | + 53    | 6       |
| Scotland . . | 2    | 1     | 237    | 220      | + 17    | 4       |
| Wales . .    | 1    | 2     | 212    | 245      | - 33    | 2       |
| Ireland . .  | 0    | 3     | 204    | 241      | - 37    | 0       |
| 1907.        |      |       |        |          |         |         |
| Scotland . . | 3    | 0     | 273    | 181      | + 92    | 6       |
| Ireland . .  | 2    | 1     | 254    | 216      | + 38    | 4       |
| England . .  | 1    | 2     | 221    | 252      | - 31    | 2       |
| Wales . .    | 0    | 3     | 189    | 288      | - 99    | 0       |

INTERNATIONAL RESULTS—*continued*

| Country.     | Won. | Lost. | Shots. |          | Margin. | Points. |
|--------------|------|-------|--------|----------|---------|---------|
|              |      |       | For.   | Against. |         |         |
| 1908.        |      |       |        |          |         |         |
| Scotland . . | 2    | 1     | 253    | 214      | + 39    | 4       |
| Wales . .    | 2    | 1     | 234    | 240      | - 6     | 4       |
| England . .  | 1    | 2     | 224    | 236      | - 12    | 2       |
| Ireland . .  | 1    | 2     | 218    | 239      | - 21    | 2       |
| 1909.        |      |       |        |          |         |         |
| Scotland . . | 3    | 0     | 327    | 191      | +136    | 6       |
| Wales . .    | 1    | 2     | 234    | 264      | - 30    | 2       |
| England . .  | 1    | 2     | 217    | 265      | - 48    | 2       |
| Ireland . .  | 1    | 2     | 212    | 270      | - 58    | 2       |
| 1910.        |      |       |        |          |         |         |
| Scotland . . | 3    | 0     | 288    | 182      | +106    | 6       |
| Ireland . .  | 2    | 1     | 242    | 211      | + 31    | 4       |
| England . .  | 1    | 2     | 209    | 265      | - 56    | 2       |
| Wales . .    | 0    | 3     | 190    | 271      | - 81    | 0       |
| 1911.        |      |       |        |          |         |         |
| England . .  | 3    | 0     | 230    | 199      | + 31    | 6       |
| Wales . .    | 2    | 1     | 228    | 207      | + 21    | 4       |
| Scotland . . | 1    | 2     | 222    | 239      | - 17    | 2       |
| Ireland . .  | 0    | 3     | 213    | 248      | - 35    | 0       |

## CHAPTER VIII

### "LOOSE ENDS"

THE GAME IN "FOREIGN PARTS"—*Boulingrin* and *Boulevard*—Charles Berjeau's conjecture—Evelyn in the Luxembourg Gardens—Dickens's Pictures from Genoa and Avignon—In Provence—Frank Gillett's sketches—Among the Bretons—At a discount in the Fatherland—Teniers the Younger's picture—In the United States—The ubiquitous Scot—The Kimberley Green—MUNICIPAL GREENS—Edinburgh experience and practice—Abuse of public greens—RECORDS—Sixteen "up" in two ends—Eight in one end at Reading—Ernest C. Price's experiences—A double tie—A love game.

### THE GAME IN "FOREIGN PARTS"

CONSIDERING the rudimentary and somewhat childish form it takes on the Continent, Bowls, outside of the British Empire, cannot have undergone any evolution to speak of, and probably still retains its primitive features.

Bowls of sorts has been known in France from the first half of the 15th century, at any rate if the tradition be well founded which has bestowed upon an area in the north-east of Rouen the name of Place du Boulingrin. This appellation has been current, according

to the *Daily Telegraph* (January 4th, 1906), "since the soldiers of Henry v. and Bedford played Bowls round the walls of the French city in the years just before Joan of Arc was burnt within them" (1431). One cannot, however, avoid the suspicion that such a recreation was only a casual amusement to pass the time.

The word *Boulingrin* is a corruption of "Bowling green," and the fact that the French adopted the term points, therefore, to the likelihood of their having borrowed the game from the English. In that case it is more than probable that the Continental varieties of the pastime are practically survivals of the pristine game and that its ultimate source was London, which was thus the fruitful parent of Bowls not in England alone but throughout the world. My friend Charles Berjeau reminds me that Vauban and other military engineers employed the term *boulingrin* in fortification for an esplanade under grass. He further acutely remarks that "Boulevard" is *Boule verte*, which translates literally into "Bowling green"; this ingenious surmise should be noted, despite the customary view that "boulevard" is simply a variant of "bulwark," or rampart.

On April 1st, 1644, John Evelyn visited the gardens of the Luxembourg Palace in Paris

and was impressed by the extent to which the inhabitants of all classes were addicted to an open-air life. It was not one of the least diversions in what he called "this paradise" to observe the "number of persons of quality, citizens and strangers, who frequent it, and to whom all accesse is freely permitted, so that you shall see some walkes and retirements full of gallants and ladys; in others melancholy fryers; in others studious scholars; in others jolly citizens, some sitting or lying on ye grasse, others running and jumping; some playing at Bowles and ball, others dancing and singing; and all this without the least disturbance, by reason of the largeness of the place."

In the spring of 1646 Evelyn reached Vincenza, in North Italy, "passing by y<sup>e</sup> Euganean hills, celebrated for the prospects and furniture of rare simples, which we found growing about them. The wayes were something deepe, the whole country flat and even as a Bowling green." Evelyn was fond of Bowls and this casual-seeming simile is of importance as proving by its double emphasis, "flat and even," that the level green was already become the recognised type of lawn. Moreover, such a touch was hardly likely to occur to any but a Bowler. Arriving in Geneva in May of the same year, he remarks incidentally "where



there is also a Bowling-place," just as if he had been looking for one; though since mention is at the same time made of a "tavern, and a true-table [a table used in games of chance], and here they ride their menaged horses," it may have been a bowling-alley.

Charles Dickens visited Italy in 1845-46 and contributed to the *Daily News* the series of graphic articles afterwards published in book form as *Pictures from Italy*. During his sojourn in Genoa he witnessed many festivals, amongst them that of San Nazaro. "The men," he wrote, "in red caps and with loose coats hanging on their shoulders (they never put them on), were playing Bowls and buying sweetmeats immediately outside the church. When half a dozen of them finished a game, they came into the aisle, crossed themselves with the holy water, knelt on one knee for an instant, and walked off again to play another game at Bowls. They are remarkably expert at this diversion, and will play in the stony lanes and streets, and on the most uneven and disastrous ground for such a purpose, with as much nicety as on a billiard-table." It is obvious that this pastime, queerly punctuated with sweetmeats and piety, bore not the slightest resemblance to our game on the level green. Yet that it was a variety of the sport adapted to a novel surface and actually

known as Bowls, is tolerably plain from his brief sketch of the scene that greeted him as he left Avignon on a broiling midsummer day. "The heat being very great," he says, "the roads outside the walls were strewn with people fast asleep in every little slip of shade, and with lazy groups, half asleep and half awake, who were waiting until the sun should be low enough to admit of their playing Bowls amongst the burnt-up trees and on the dusty road."

As a *divertissement* Bowls is played with the liveliest gusto in the South of France. The London *Daily Graphic* of March 15th, 1904, published an article from a correspondent who supplied some details of the game *à la française*. He discovered that the working man in Southern France had taken up the pastime "with a seriousness and enthusiasm which are almost Anglo-Saxon. It is true there is no beautifully-kept lawn, turf being practically unknown; the bowl, too, is circular instead of elliptical—but what of that? The small port of Villefranche has a club located in the disused part of a stone quarry, which from constant use has become hardened to the consistency of asphalt. The rules are identical with those which govern the English game, but it would be too much to expect a Frenchman to stroll through his play as we do. When about to bowl he takes a hop, a skip,

and a short zigzag run, then stops dead, and slowly trickles the ball in the direction of the jack. The usual table and stools stand near by, on which are several bottles of *vin ordinaire* in various stages of emptiness. A particularly good 'lie' always necessitates a visit to this alfresco *buvette*, after which Jacques Bonhomme returns to his game with renewed zest." Accompanying this account are some sketches by Frank Gillett, so vivid and lifelike that they realise for us the very scene and the ecstatic exuberance of the players.

Breton fishermen and small farmers at Morgat, near Brest, indulge in a pastime that is akin to that of the Provençal artisans, but their sobriety of demeanour is in marked contrast to the gaiety of the excitable Southron. Mr. Lachlan Taylor, of the Essex County B.C., has most obligingly given me some interesting particulars of the curious Breton game. It is played on a rink of fine sea sand rolled hard and smooth. The rink measures from twenty-five to thirty yards in length by about four yards in width, and is lined on each side by boarding one foot high and three feet high across the ends. The bowls are made of *lignum vitæ*, have a diameter of four inches, but are perfectly round, bias being obtained by inserting a plug of lead, half an inch in diameter, into the wood to a depth of half an inch. When the

player wishes to draw, the bowl is held with the bias side innermost, but when he wishes to drive, he turns the bias to the top. The jack is a wooden ball, two and a half or three inches in diameter, and play is always made to the jack wherever it may happen to lie. In order to get round a bowl that is either short or in the draw, it is considered good play to cannon off the side boarding ("cannon off the cush"). Mr. Taylor saw several rinks, or alleys, in Brest, where he met with a brither Scot over seventy years of age, who had spent thirty-seven years in the town and, though speaking French like a native, still had the Doric. He explained all the points of the Breton game, and Mr. Taylor then had a "run up" and found the pitch play well. He thought that the sea sand probably held together on account of the salt with which it was thoroughly impregnated, and when rolled hard and played upon by men wearing the soft rope-soled shoon of the Bretons, it stands a fair amount of wear and tear. The Bretons were as keen in their game as the Scots in theirs. Many of the rinks are laid down in connection with hotels and taverns, and custom requires the losers to stand the winners a glass of wine.

Facilities for playing the French variety exist in Paris (near the Luxembourg and the

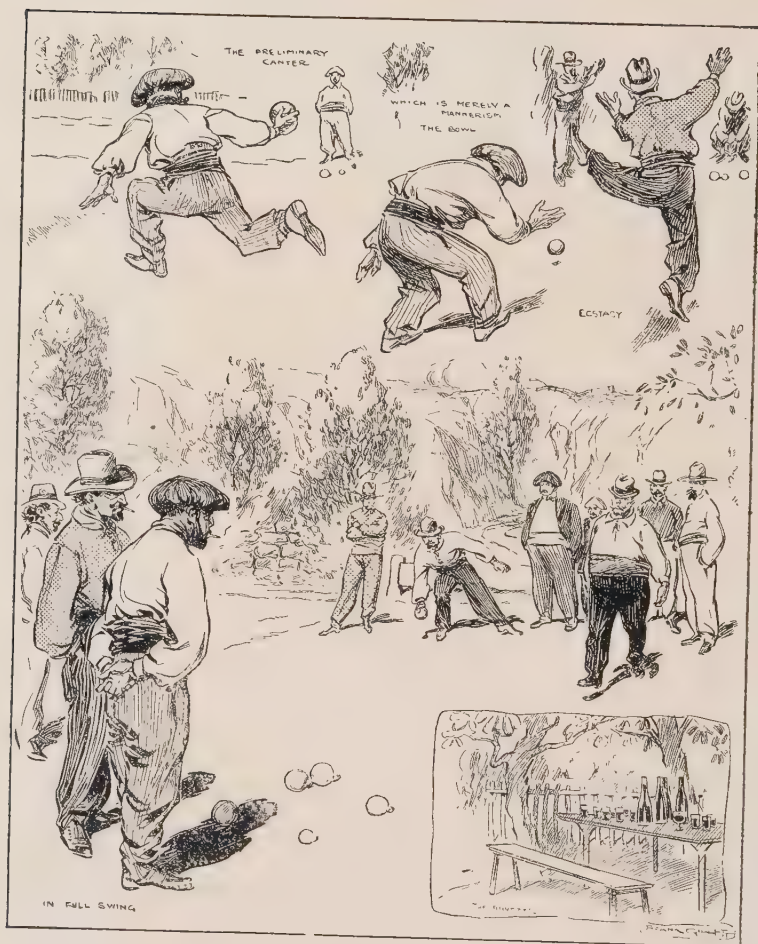
Champs Elysées, for instance) and some of the larger cities and towns. The game has been organised after a fashion, and is played single-handed, or in sets of two and three a-side, but, though it gives rise to plenty of gesticulation and volubility, cannot be considered a scientific game. Play, as at Morgat, takes place in an *endroit*, or reserved space with a prepared surface, usually not composed of grass, towards the *cochonnet*, or jack; and the score is reckoned in the way with which British players are familiar. But the pastime is vitiated by the fact that unbiassed bowls are used.

Bowls is not played seriously to any great extent in the Fatherland. This is to be regretted, for the game is indicated as exceptionally adapted to the temperament and habits of the German artisan and the studious and lettered classes. Robert Aris Willmott, in his *Pleasures, Objects and Advantages of Literature*, has an interesting allusion to Mozart who, he says, “composed, whenever he had the opportunity, in the soft air of fine weather. His *Don Giovanni* and the *Requiem* were written in a Bowling green and a garden.”

In the National Gallery, Edinburgh, may be seen a fine and characteristic example of the work of David Teniers (1610–?1690), which belongs to the Torrie Collection, the







PROVENÇAL WORKING MEN PLAYING AT BOWLS. (See p. 109.)

(After Drawings by Mr. Frank Gillett,  
reproduced by permission of "The Daily Graphic.")

property of the University of Edinburgh, the Senatus of which has permitted its exhibition on the walls of the Gallery. Unfortunately it is officially described as "Peasants playing at Skittles." The composition shows that three Dutch peasants, of the well-known Teniers type, have already bowled towards an upright tee, while a fourth is in the act of delivering his bowl. The picture should really be named "Peasants playing at Bowls," an upright peg, about four inches high, doing duty as the mark instead of a jack—recalling, in this respect, the ancient English version of the game in which a cone was bowled to (p. 5).

In the United States Bowls has not, as the saying is, "caught on." This is remarkable enough, seeing that Scotland has contributed generously to the population of the Union. The probability is that the game has been deemed lacking in "purple patches" and altogether too slow for the eager American temperament. Still, though started somewhat tentatively at first, clubs have been founded in several of the States, and the future, if not the present, will be with the pastime.

When we find a game like Bowls turning up in unexpected quarters, it is proper to assume that it was introduced there by the ubiquitous Scot, who is, in truth, the only begetter of its geographical distribution. Its occurrence,

sporadically, in the East — as in India (Calcutta, Karachi), Hong Kong, and Japan (Kobe, Yokohama, and Kumamoto)—is doubtless thus to be explained. The prevalence of clubs in South Africa (Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Kimberley, and elsewhere) is rather what might have been expected, and the pastime is likely to enjoy a long and vigorous career under the auspices of the united British and Dutch peoples. Probably no Bowling community in the world ever went through so unique and so anxious an experience as did the Kimberley Club, of which Cecil Rhodes was a generous supporter, for their green was exposed to a double danger during the 126 days' siege by the Boers. On the one hand, it lay within range of the enemy's fire, and, on the other, its existence seemed doomed when the edict went forth enjoining the most rigid economy in the use of water. Yet on the relief of the town by Sir John French on February 16th, 1900, the lawn was found to be in excellent condition, nor had any person suffered injury. How the turf had been preserved was a mystery, for during the hostilities day passed after day without sign even of "a little cloud not bigger than a man's hand," and the grass appeared to be denied its natural sustenance. The local theory was presumably the right one, that some zealous Bowler, by an extraordinary

lapse of memory, periodically forgot Colonel Kekewich's order and, taking the risk of being bowled over by the Boers, ministered by stealth to the comfort of the turf.

### MUNICIPAL GREENS

That Bowls is a real *Volksspiel* is proved by the extent to which it has become municipalised not in the United Kingdom only, but in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. Unfortunately, park superintendents are not always Bowlers, and do not therefore appreciate the necessity of employing professional contractors in the construction of the greens. Turf from downs and links by the sea stands the wear and tear of Bowling far better than meadow turf does, yet in too many cases the nearest available grass—sometimes even stripped from the very park in which the green is being made—is employed both for entirely new greens and for extensions, alterations, and repairs. This is false economy, for a green of ordinary grass, which may cost only £100, will in the end prove dearer than a proper green costing £500 or £600. The latter, “well and truly laid” and in the custody of a competent keeper, will last “for ever,” but the other will never be satisfactory, will demand constant repairs, and will finally be stripped

and replaced with a green of sea turf, constructed on scientific principles.

One aspect of the municipal green which town councils should not lose sight of is that, given the original outlay, many a public green will become self-supporting. The experience of Edinburgh—where the public greens have been periodically added to since 1860—is conclusive. The normal revenue derived from the players, not far short of two hundred thousand a year, is considerably in excess of £900. Several of the greens more than pay for their upkeep, and the total annual deficiency over all is under £200. The income is obtained from a charge of 1d. per hour per player, which of course entitles him to the use of bowls, unless he choose to use his own, and one halfpenny per hour for the hire of smooth-soled rubber shoes.

Artisans resort to the municipal greens in Scotland and the northern and midland counties of England in great numbers—a most pleasant feature. In this regard there is room for much-needed improvement on similar greens in many of the parks in London and elsewhere, on which men well able to afford the subscription of a private club habitually play, to the exclusion of poorer persons, eager to play, but crowded out by their brethren of more fortunate purse. This



is a manifest abuse of public greens which, *ex hypothesi*, were never intended for Bowlers in more or less comfortable circumstances. Theoretically, they may be within their legal rights, but what is legally right is sometimes neither expedient nor admirable. These "use and wont" players have gone even further, and formed themselves into clubs for the purpose of playing matches with other clubs, thus monopolising on occasion three or four rinks of a municipal green for perhaps three hours at a stretch. Probably they contrive to do this within the letter of the local regulations, but such a sustained user of the green against the equal rights of the Bowls-loving public needs to be jealously guarded.

Since Edinburgh set the example of municipalising the game on systematic lines, it is worthy of remark that every precaution is taken to prevent the rights of the public from being abused by any club. This has been rendered possible by the far-sighted policy of laying down greens of exceptional dimensions in the first instance. Every club playing on these civic greens must be duly registered on or before the 30th April in each year. The procedure requires the secretary to fill in a proper application form, stating the name of the club and the dates of the proposed matches for the season. A permit is then



issued for such dates as have not been already booked by other clubs, and the matches are duly entered in the register kept at the Public Parks Office in the City Chambers. Only four rinks on each green are at the disposal of clubs, the other four being always reserved for the general public. Should a club apply for rinks on a green already allotted, it is offered rinks on another green, if any be available. To frustrate any attempt to deceive citizens, all permits must be exhibited by the different clubs at the respective greens, so that they may be read by all and sundry. These regulations appear to meet the case, for complaint is seldom if ever lodged with the Superintendent of Parks.

## RECORDS

If the extraordinary feats achieved in all the great sports and pastimes were duly recorded, they would make a book of vital interest. One would not exclude even anglers' exploits — adequately authenticated. Bowls should contribute its quota of remarkable doings, though it is to be feared the chronicler has missed many of them. I am able to rescue a few from oblivion. I call them "records" merely to classify them; but however described they are worth preserving.

On the 6th of July 1907, the Streatham Constitutional Bowling Club celebrated their first anniversary by a match at home between three rinks of their members and three rinks of the London County Club. Apparently an ordinary fixture, yet from small causes do great occasions spring, and one Streatham rink took part in a twofold incident that constitutes a world's record in Bowls. At the end of play the score disclosed a tie, which in itself is not rare enough to call for comment.

| STREATHAM CONSTITUTIONAL.   |   |   |       | LONDON COUNTY.                |   |   |       |
|-----------------------------|---|---|-------|-------------------------------|---|---|-------|
| S. Fortescue                |   |   |       | H. Garrod                     |   |   |       |
| C. Salisbury                |   |   |       | C. G. Gillespie               |   |   |       |
| W. H. Hine                  |   |   |       | F. Chambers                   |   |   |       |
| D. Williams ( <i>skip</i> ) | . | . | 27    | H. T. Dummett ( <i>skip</i> ) | . | . | 15    |
| H. Ash                      |   |   |       | W. G. Gale                    |   |   |       |
| J. W. Drake                 |   |   |       | R. Pearson                    |   |   |       |
| J. S. Skegg                 |   |   |       | T. Sugden                     |   |   |       |
| T. Woof ( <i>skip</i> )     | . | . | 17    | J. Gillespie ( <i>skip</i> )  | . | . | 18    |
| A. E. Fortescue             |   |   |       | F. Taylor                     |   |   |       |
| C. H. Swan                  |   |   |       | F. Chalmers                   |   |   |       |
| T. Baines                   |   |   |       | G. Harrison                   |   |   |       |
| T. A. Davis ( <i>skip</i> ) | . | . | 17    | D. A. Ross ( <i>skip</i> )    | . | . | 28    |
|                             |   |   | <hr/> |                               |   |   | <hr/> |
| TOTALS                      | . | . | 61    |                               |   |   | 61    |

This guileless-looking draw no doubt afforded an exciting finish to a pleasant Saturday afternoon's match, but hides the fact that the rink skipped by Mr. D. A. Ross in two separate ends—the second and the sixteenth

—scored all eight bowls, thus being 16 shots "up" on their opponents in two heads.

The position in the second end after all bowls had been played but Ross's last was as follows:—Streatham was lying shot with a bowl some nine inches to the left of and level with the jack, but all seven bowls of London County were lying well around the mark and nearer than the second nearest of Streatham. Ross decided upon a bold stroke. With a firm draw upon the Streatham shot, he succeeded in sending it onwards, his own bowl taking its place without disturbing the jack, and so securing eight shots for his own rink.

At the sixteenth end the position was not dissimilar, even to the fact that Streatham again lay shot, with London County occupying such a position that could the jack but be carried several inches towards them, there was a certainty of a bumper score. Once more Ross distinguished himself. He saw that if he could cannon off the shot with his last bowl, he might not only send it about its business, but pass on to the jack and carry it in the required direction. This is exactly what he accomplished. The "inwick" drove Streatham far enough away to be out of the count, and Ross's bowl then hugged the jack and bore it about eighteen inches forwards and among the seven other bowls of his own

men, again giving them all eight shots. That the same skip on the same afternoon should enable his rink to score all eight bowls twice against the same rival skip, on the latter's green, was a wonderful feat which redounded immensely to Ross's reputation as a finished player and strategist.

On the other hand, instances of scoring all eight bowls in one end once in the course of a match are not uncommon. On the 10th of October 1905, I was invited to take part in a match at Reading, between Captain (T. Mackrill) *versus* Deputy-Captain (Harry Childs), four rinks a-side, which was not only the last game of the season, but the last match ever played on the old green. I played second ("the soft second") in the rink skipped by my friend, John Suddaby, whose rival was the Captain himself. Oddly enough, this match also ended in a tie (82 all), but in one end Suddaby's quartet counted their eight bowls. We scored, not because we were lying on the jack, or in dangerous proximity to it, but because our bowls were nicely distributed around it, from twelve to twenty-four inches away, and all sufficiently far apart from each other to provide "open doors" for every hostile bowl to run through.

Mr. E. C. Price informs me that he has seen an end of eight "up" nearly a dozen times.

In 1895, when he was the only English driver "up" in the English *v.* Scots match of the London and Southern Counties B.A., one of the prettiest players he ever knew (Samuel Cook), his opponent driver, accomplished the feat, although Price beat him in the long run. Another instance struck him as much more remarkable. In the first match between the Midland Counties and the London and Southern Counties Bowling Associations, which took place on the Bounds Green ground in 1897, the place of an absent rink from Southampton was taken by two members of the Bounds Green Club and two members of the Brownwood. As President of the Southern Association for the year, Price, one of the two Brownwood reserves, skipped the composite rink. Since all four players had been denied their places in the original team, it must be supposed they were regarded as inferior to the players who were nominated; but the reserves proved successful by 35 shots to 9, and scored in one end all their eight bowls. As the London and Southern Counties B.A. was victorious by 35 shots, and only the accredited Brownwood rink besides Price's was "up" on the day's play, it is clear that the composite rink did valiant service. At that date, moreover, the "toucher" game was not recognised in these matches, nor was any bowl counted

that lay more than six feet from the jack (an old English method of counting still in vogue on several greens, which of course cannot be followed wherever the "toucher" custom prevails).

Mr. D. Rice Thomas has kindly acquainted me with a curious case of double ties which constitutes a record in the history of the contest in which they occurred. This was in a first round of the Silver Shield Competition promoted by the London and Southern Counties B.A. Four rinks of the Bounds Green Club were drawn against four rinks of the Chiswick and West London Club, and, on June 2nd, 1910, two rinks a-side played on the green of the former club and two rinks a-side on the Chiswick green, with the following result :—

*At Bounds Green, London.*

| BOUNDS GREEN.  |   |   |    | CHISWICK.     |   |   |    |
|----------------|---|---|----|---------------|---|---|----|
| J. L. Thomson  | . | . | 23 | G. R. Johnson | . | . | 12 |
| G. A. Wilkins. | . | . | 19 | John Sweeney  | . | . | 19 |

*At Chiswick.*

|             |   |   |    |                |   |   |    |
|-------------|---|---|----|----------------|---|---|----|
| J. Lindsay  | . | . | 20 | D. B. Macbride | . | . | 16 |
| W. Morrison | . | . | 16 | W. F. Kitto    | . | . | 31 |
|             |   |   |    | <hr/>          |   |   |    |
| TOTALS      | . | . | 78 |                |   |   |    |
|             |   |   |    |                |   |   | 78 |

In accordance with the rule, an extra end was played off on each green in view of a possible tie (which actually happened), with the



further result that at Bounds Green the score showed—

|          |   |   |   |     |               |         |   |   |   |     |
|----------|---|---|---|-----|---------------|---------|---|---|---|-----|
| Thomson  | . | . | 2 | } 2 | <i>versus</i> | Johnson | . | . | 0 | } 2 |
| Wilkins. | . | . | 0 |     |               | Sweeney | . | . | 2 |     |

while at Chiswick green the score was—

|          |   |   |   |     |        |          |   |   |   |     |
|----------|---|---|---|-----|--------|----------|---|---|---|-----|
| Lindsay. | . | . | 1 | } I | versus | Macbride | . | . | 0 | } I |
| Morrison | . | . | 0 |     |        | Kitto    | . | . | 1 |     |
|          |   |   |   |     |        |          |   |   |   |     |
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that the conquerors were playing at home, a love victory was a very fair exploit.

Onlookers are said to see the best of the game, and the reason for the defeat of the Southsea couple was apparent to me whilst watching the play. One of the visitors grew so savage at the figure he and his partner were cutting that he took to delivering his bowl anyhow, with the desire of ending as quickly as possible what he deemed a fiasco, which, indeed, he was doing his best to make it. In Bowls, as in other games of skill, one must keep one's temper. But I have repeatedly noticed that to lose well is as fine a test of sportmanship as to win well.

Records must, of course, be appraised for what they are worth. In a sense they may even be regarded as flukes or freaks, for it is out of the question to suppose that any sportsman who achieves what is uncommon actually entered upon his game, on this or that occasion, with the express and deliberate purpose of accomplishing something extraordinary. The instances of the numerous successful attempts to reduce time records in cycling races and the like do not contradict the view here advanced, for improvements in machines, and even in the breeds of horses, are constantly going on and are periodically bound to produce results

which may be said to have been, in a measure, hoped for and worked for by inventor, manufacturer, and breeder alike ; while the athlete who aims at beating a previous performance only expresses, in his way, what is the legitimate and laudable aim of all human endeavour. So the remarkable exploits with which **Bowlers** have been credited must be looked at rather as things apart and taken at their face value. Though they may not, and frequently do not teach anything that another man, or set of men, may certainly rehearse with similar effect, nevertheless they possess real historical interest and are worthy of being chronicled.

PART II  
PRACTICE





BRETON PEASANTS PLAYING AT BOWLS AT MORGAT, NEAR BREST. (See p. 110.)  
(From a Photograph by Mr. Lachlan Taylor, Leigh-on-Sea.)





## CHAPTER IX

### THE WEARING OF THE GREEN

Bowls as a Christmas Sport—A Contractor Essential—The Ideal Green—The Ditchboard Inquiry—Solway Turf—Drawbacks of Small Greens—Weeds—The Kew Lawns—Worms—Darwin's View—Daniel Leslie's Treatment—Climate and Greens—Scythe, Lawn-mower, and Roller—"Tricky" Greens—How Bias may be Nullified—The Old English Bowl—The Crown-Green Game—The Groundman—One Green One Man—The Greenkeeper in Winter—Tippling, Tipping, and Tobacco—The Ranger, or Green Rota—Loan of Rinks, or Green—The Golden Rule.

"WHANNE that April with his showres sote [sweet] the draughte of March hath percèd to the rote [root]," the Bowler begins to examine with anxious heed the condition of his green, for he hopes to renew acquaintance with the turf on "the maddest, merriest day" of all the year, or on the first Saturday of May.

Bowls in the open air in winter is not unknown, but may be looked at in the light of a freak of Sport. During a spell of "by-ordinar'" geniality, the greenkeeper of the Alloa West End B.C., finding the turf in fit order, trimmed and rolled the green, and

invitations were promptly issued for a match between the West End and East End Clubs of the town on January 3rd, 1911. Play lasted for more than two hours, and all the time the sun shone brilliantly on a "dour fecht," for the home team only won by seven shots (71-64). Yet on the very same day curlers enjoyed the "roaring game" on the artificial pond in Alloa Park !

Further, Dr. Robert Carruthers tells us that, towards the end of the 18th century, Christmas festivities in Inverness "were usually kept up for two or three weeks—the gentlemen playing Bowls during the day, and the ladies amusing themselves at the card tables." W. W. Mitchell, when in his seventy-seventh year, played for four hours on Christmas Day, 1879, on one of the Willowbank greens in Glasgow, "as well, perhaps, as ever he had previously done," the turf being protected by a sheet of oilcloth, about six feet long, to receive the take-off of the bowls.

But, such exceptions notwithstanding, it is reasonable to paraphrase what old Tom Morris said of golf courses, when asked what he thought about Sunday play, "If Bowlers don't need a rest, the green does." Upon a perfect green Bowls is quite another game from what it is upon a lawn of common or meadow turf. Then even the tyro will discover the unsuspected

beauties of the game, while the veteran never wearies of trying for fresh varieties of defence and attack—the gambits of Bowls. In short, the difference between a perfect green and a third- or fourth-rate one measures the difference between a game of skill and a game largely of luck.

What, then, is the whole duty of a Bowling Club, starting *de novo*? In the first place, it must take care that the ground it is about to acquire is large enough to allow of (a) the construction of a full-sized green, with surrounding pathway and flower-beds, and (b) the erection of a pavilion, bowl-house, and lavatory, and (c), if possible, a lawn for croquet or tennis. (This last is an “extra” that will be appreciated by the ladies, who are so good as to preside over Saturday teas and other social functions.) The moving spirits will, of course, “raise the wind” before proceeding with their undertaking, the cost of which can be exactly ascertained before a single document is signed. In view of the expense it is clear that the lease should be for a long period—not less than twenty-one years.

In the second place, it is extremely desirable that the promoters should engage a professional contractor of repute to construct the green and its surroundings, leaving the pavilion to be erected by a local builder. If the founders

cannot draw up a full specification, it will be in order to ask the contractor to submit one, *with inclusive charges*, and, as a matter of business, it is usual to approach two or three contractors, so as to compare and check prices, and so forth. As a rule, the contractor will inspect the ground before tendering, and the promoters may then elicit all the information they wish for.

To prevent misapprehension, the projectors must understand that an ideal green is 42 yards square, but that, in addition, there will be required all round the green ground for the ditch (14 inches wide), the banks (18 inches wide), the pathway (at least six feet), and the flower-bed beyond (say, 12 feet). Therefore for the green and its surroundings, independently of space for the pavilion and adjuncts, and the croquet or tennis lawn, an area at least 50 yards square should be reserved, and even with this allowance things may be a little cramped. Where land is plentiful, 70 yards square, or the equivalent of an acre, would provide a splendid pitch.

It should be explained that the dimensions of a green are not governed by the laws of the game, save by inference. In cricket, for example, the M.C.C. enactments stipulate that the stumps shall be pitched 22 yards apart, neither more nor less; but in Bowls a certain

degree of latitude is sanctioned. The first law enjoins that a rink, or playing space, shall be not less than 19 feet, nor more than 21 feet wide ; and the eighth law requires the jack to be thrown not less than 25 yards from the mat, while it may be thrown as much farther as the player pleases, provided that, when it comes to rest, it shall be at least six feet from the ditch. Subject, therefore, to these imperative conditions the size of the green may be regarded as an open question.

In actual experience, however, it has been found—as we have just said—that a green 42 yards square furnishes an ideal lawn. There are substantial reasons for this preference. A green of that size admits of six rinks (21 feet  $\times$  6 = 126 feet, or 42 yards), affording space for forty-eight players, that is, eight players (four a-side) to every rink. This would supply ample accommodation for a club of one hundred members at least, and it is by no means uncommon, on holidays and even of a Saturday afternoon, when there is a large muster of members, for seven rinks to be in full swing at once on a green 42 yards square. In these friendly games such infringement of the letter of the law is winked at as innocent, though it would be improper in matches and handicaps.

But there is another consideration of, at all



events, equal importance in constructing a green 42 yards square, in that it allows of play in opposite directions in alternate weeks. Suppose, by way of illustration, that play is had one week from north to south and south to north, in the following week it would be made from east to west and west to east; such an arrangement is of inestimable benefit to the green, which is thus rested in both directions in turns every other week. It is customary to find a scientifically-laid green exhibiting scarcely any signs of wear and tear at the close of the busiest season. I examined the Luton Place green one autumn, and was astonished to discover not the slightest trace of weakness, and this must be one of the hardest-worked greens in Scotland.

If is safe to say that in Scotland not a green can be seen without a ditch, and it is equally safe to say that, until 1871, or thereabouts, in England south of the Border counties not a green could have been seen with one. The "toucher" game renders a ditch essential, and, since it plays a prominent part in nearly every end, it is important to keep the ditch in good order. In 1908 the Scottish B.A. undertook a "ditchboard inquiry" which was of some practical value. In order that "touchers" driven into the ditch might come to rest as near as possible to the spot where they entered

it, the Scots Council advised constituent clubs to see that the boards, or cross-spars bottoming the ditch, were not less than two inches and a half below the surface of the green. This recommendation not having been complied with generally, the question next arose whether gravel, or sand, or other suitable material should not be substituted for ditchboards, and the clubs were requested to report whether their greens were equipped with ditchboards, or with ditches containing gravel or sand. Only some 40 per cent. of the clubs chose to respond, and it appeared that seventy-four used ditchboards (that is to say, kept the ditches empty), forty-three gravel, twenty-three sand, while ten used other materials. Having regard to the comparative indifference with which many clubs viewed the subject and the wide variety of usage evidenced by the practice of the clubs that had reported, the Scottish B.A. did not feel empowered to take legislative action.

Gravel or sand promptly stops the career of driving or driven bowls, and either substance, in this respect, is superior to the wooden spars of the ditchboard. On the other hand, a ditch full of small gravel is a permanent nuisance, and the ends of many a beautiful green are disfigured by stray pebbles kicked or knocked out of the ditch. Sea sand, well sifted before

being deposited in the ditch, is so far free from objection that its presence on the green is not detrimental either to the turf or a bowl on the draw.

Most new greens are laid with turf from the Solway Firth, much of the sward lying within tidal limits. Every effort should be made to enable the contractor to lay the green in autumn, so that the turf may have a chance of establishing itself before frost sets in. Naturally members expect to enjoy a full season's play, and this will only be possible on a green that has been finished not later than the previous November. When a contractor pooh-poohs this, it is likely he has an interest in postponing operations until after Christmas. Play may be had in May on a new green completed in November, but it would be foolish to play before July on a green finished in February. The objection to allowing a green to lie fallow for a whole season is that, in such circumstances, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to keep the club together. This course, however, can be adopted in the case of a club which is obliged to leave its old quarters and which, taking time by the forelock, lays its new green during the last season of play on the old one.

In country towns ground for a full-sized green should be obtainable easily enough, but

in London and other populous centres, where land is dear and not always available, clubs have sometimes to be content with the largest space they can get. Usually they can always secure an area that will furnish room for a fair-length jack and three rinks. But such a green cannot be played upon up and down one week and crosswise the next, and so on alternately, because the total width (say, 24 yards) clearly will not allow of even a minimum jack. Accordingly play can only be had in one direction (to and fro). Moreover, if the green be also deficient in length, both ends of the lawn are sure to be worn "to the bone" before the close of the season. Though remote from the ideal, such a green is quite a possible green; in fact, a lawn only big enough for one rink, but 10 yards wide and 35 yards long, would yet be a green within "the meaning of the Act." But every green of distinctly limited dimensions is a standing worry. For one thing, the ends must be re-laid every autumn, and repair on this humble scale must necessarily be undertaken by the groundman, who may or may not make a good job of it. Hence excess of zeal in prolonging the season in the event of a mild October is mischievous, since it postpones the inevitable repair.

In addition to renewal of turf, the green should also be weeded. Hand weeding is the

safest way to eradicate weeds, but the careful labour this demands can seldom be procured. Consequently various chemicals are resorted to, but they must not be indiscriminately employed. For charlock, daisies, plantains, and other rough-leaved weeds, it is stated that copper sulphate (in the proportion of forty gallons of a 4 per cent. solution to the acre) and iron sulphate (in the proportion of forty gallons of a 15 per cent. solution to the acre) may be used with advantage. The chemical composition called lawn sand, sprinkled in dry weather on weeds, is said to burn them out, while at the same time acting as a fertiliser. Repairs having been completed, the whole green should be covered to a depth not exceeding the third of an inch or so, with a counterpane of sea sand, which will be absorbed by spring, feeding the turf and maintaining or replenishing its elasticity. In fact, every green is none the worse for this winter blanket. In February, should the grass of the repaired portions seem backward, a top-dressing<sup>2</sup> of bone meal or soot may be applied. But no fertiliser should be employed that will force the grass to such an extent as to produce the thick velvety carpet that is apt to make the bowl drag in its progress towards the jack.

Kew Gardens are famous for their lawns.

There, according to Mr. W. J. Bean's *Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew*, weeds are uprooted by the spud. Vitriol dropped in the centre of weeds, or salt laid on them, is efficacious, provided the work be done with scrupulous care, but the process is very laborious and may cause disfigurement. For plantains, dandelions, and daisies he considers there is nothing better than a generous treatment of the grass, for it is where grass is thin and soil poor that weeds effect their firmest foothold. At Kew he finds that fine soil, rotted manure, or almost any kind of fine humus, thinly spread over the surface in February, is the simplest plan of renovating thin, poor grass. "Our experience at Kew with artificial manures as a top-dressing for lawns," he adds, "is not such as to lead us to recommend them. They stimulate the grass into great activity of growth for a short time, but produce no permanent benefit commensurate with the cost." The Kew practice applies to meadow turf, and Mr. Bean would himself admit that the sea turf of a Bowling green demands different treatment. Daniel Leslie, for instance, holds it to be a great mistake to put soil either under or above turf on a green. "I have," he writes, "made and re-laid a hundred and fifty greens without a spadeful of soil, and they are all living yet."



Worms—Nature's ventilators of the soil—are supposed to be the *bêtes noires* of green-layer and groundman alike. Readers, however, of Charles Darwin's classic monograph on *The Formation of Vegetable Mould through the Action of Worms* may entertain doubts on the subject. Though the turf on a Bowling green is not more than two inches in thickness, such a layer will accommodate the earthworm. Bowlers imagine that cinder and sand are inimical to worms, and probably this is the case within limits. Darwin, nevertheless, found grains of sand, small stones, rose thorns, and small splinters of glass in their gizzards, whilst he proved that the creatures also worked their way through old concrete and decayed mortar at Beaulieu Abbey and in Roman remains at Chedworth and Brading. They could burrow even through a layer of coarse cinders three and a half inches thick. Lime water will generally bring them to the surface, where the groundman can dispose of them, and he should also make a point of sweeping away the casts daily with his broom.

Daniel Leslie, on the other hand, considers worms a decided pest. "If a green is properly made by a practical man there will be no worms in it to begin with, if laid with sea turf, as worms will not live in turf overflowed by the tide." Leslie, on his part, is a trifle dogmatic,

for he overlooks the fact that worms do not always come upwards, but find their way to the turf from the surrounding banks and flower-beds ; while, as for salt water, at all events a large class of marine worms revel in it, showing that the sea is not necessarily fatal to the worm kind. There are many ways, he says, of killing worms, but the trouble is to kill their eggs, for what will kill the *ova* will probably kill the grass, too. The most effective worm-killer he has found during a quarter of a century's experience is "corrosive sublimate (two ounces to a quart bottle) dissolved with a spoonful of alcohol and filled up with water. A wineglassful of this in two gallons of water, well mixed and put on with a watering-can, will bring them up in a hurry."

Climatically, Bowls may be played wherever suitable turf will establish itself, as has been abundantly demonstrated in Scotland. There are clubs in every shire in the kingdom, and Sir Alexander Rae, a bowler of many years' experience, who has known the town all his life, informs me that the greens in Wick are of undoubted excellence. Since matches are held annually, home and away, between Wick and Thurso, the latter on the Pentland Firth, it may be held as proved that the pastime is not barred anywhere within the length and breadth of Caledonia "stern and wild." Nay more,

Orcadians have made their game—even at midnight in the longest days—on greens at Kirkwall, built of native turf, which is, however, softer than that the Solway affords, and so plays rather on the dull side.

In Scotland the greens are mostly mown with the scythe, which, in the opinion of many, is the only instrument that should be used on a first-class green. But the majority of groundmen, in other respects well up to their work, cannot handle the scythe and perforce employ the lawn-mower, which is a capital substitute. To punch the green all over with a board set with big nails and fastened to a broomstick is a method of harrowing that gives good results in the way of ventilating the turf, the operation being sometimes accompanied with a “sowing” of sea sand.

Remarkable diversity of practice prevails in the weight of the roller. One Bowler who visited a large number of greens expressly to ascertain what the facts were was astonished to discover an extraordinary variety of weight, the rollers varying from two and a half cwts. to as much as ten and a half. The use of a half-ton roller is positively injurious to any green, as it cakes the surface, and binds and consolidates the turf, stifling growth and suffocating the grass. It is necessary to distinguish between the soft and tender meadow turf,

the least suitable covering for a green, and the hard, wiry, elastic turf which, laid *secundum artem*, is not a "preen the waur" after a season's wear and tear. Few greens require a roller of more than three cwts., and five cwts. should be regarded as the outside limit.

One common defect of most meadow-turf and a few sea-turf greens is "trickiness." It is mainly due to faulty construction and the foolish reluctance of clubs to "tamper with" a green after it has been laid. The fact is that every green without exception takes two or three years to settle down, and flaws may be looked for almost as a matter of course. The usual fault is a tendency to sink in parts, and should the turf not be raised and levelled at the spots, the green fails to run truly and becomes "tricky." Moreover, the foundation of the whole lawn sometimes falls in this or that direction, and a slope is developed, not visible to the naked eye, but quite obvious when a bowl travels over it. Ocular demonstration can always be had of the weak patches in a green by watching it during a prolonged downpour. The rain collects in all the depressions, however shallow and however numerous, and any Bowler will render his club a real service by then staking out the hollows, which the groundman shall afterwards correct.

Needless to say, a green must be perfectly

flat, looking just like a vast billiard-table, and respond with reasonable accuracy to the spirit-level.

A true green accounts for much. I have known protests lodged by English clubs against bowls of No. 3 bias—the smallest bias any self-respecting Bowler would use,—on the ground that they ran nearly straight on some greens. Instead, however, of pointing to insufficient bias, the objection indicated rather that the greens in question were so rough and poor that the grass held up the bowls and prevented them from taking their bias. The best bowls are turned for greens of presumed superlative quality, in normal weather true and keen, upon which players soon learn, in the words of a former Duke of Newcastle, to “do what they like with their own.” Upon such greens a bowl of No. 3 bias would operate as to the manner born. Owing to their shape, the old-fashioned English bowls, rounder and smaller than those now in vogue and with enormous bias, roll over obstacles that would kill the bias of the heavier, more oblate, and more scientific bowls produced by the best present-day makers. On a perfect green these bowls of inordinate bias would monopolise nearly the whole of the lawn. The real remedy in the protests alluded to was, of course, to re-lay or improve the greens.







DUTCH PEASANTS PLAYING AT BOWLS. (See p. 113.)

(From a Photograph, by Messrs. Annan & Sons, of the original Picture by David Teniers, the Younger.)

These considerations raise the old controversy of level greens *versus* crown greens, the latter type being almost exclusively confined to Lancashire, Yorkshire, some of the English Midland counties, and the Isle of Man. As its name implies, a crown green is a lawn, some forty yards square, or more, with a fall of from twelve to eighteen inches from the crown or centre all round to the ditch. It is usually played in singles with bowls of little bias and generally "all over the shop," that is, in any direction—up and down, diagonally, horizontally. Each player carries a wooden jack of similar bias to that of his bowls, which gives the first player a clear clue to the likely run of his bowls, thus rendering it incumbent upon him to watch the course of the jack from the moment he throws it until it come to rest. The utmost that can be urged in favour of the crown-green pastime is that it yields a sporting, though not a scientific game. Yet this admission must not be pushed too far. In a great pastime we have a right to look for qualities somewhat rarer and less fleeting than glorious uncertainty. One might perhaps get a sporting game on a billiard-table with the cloth split right across, but I fancy John Roberts, or H. W. Stevenson, or George Gray would soon sigh for a proper board.

What has always puzzled me about crown

greens is that they should ever have been constructed preferentially. Why a club laying down a new green should deliberately choose what has been ingenuously described as a "slightly uneven" lawn rather than a perfectly flat sheet of turf is one of those things that, in Lord Dundreary's words, "no fellow can understand." Presuming, therefore, that most men play Bowls for something more than mere sportiveness, such attributes as judgment, strategy, skill and science are demanded in a far higher degree on a level than on a crown green. Though tournaments for large sums of money do not affect the principle of the game, unhappily these inducements to play are growing more instead of less intimately associated with the crown-green pastime.

It is certain, too, that the level-green variety constitutes the historical game of Bowls, which one would expect *a priori*. In the infancy of every sport practice is necessarily crude and tentative. Rule of thumb prevails for many generations and codified laws only appear at a late stage. But this is not to say that in actual play men kept up a haphazard system year after year and decade after decade. An unwritten code develops inevitably. As in morals, the methods of play in this or that sport "rise on stepping-stones of their dead selves to higher things." The presumption,

therefore, is reasonable that, all unchronicled though it be, the Bowlers of old went on improving their game in many directions. To suppose that they left the greens untouched, maintaining their pristine state of hillocks and hollows and other "unevennesses" is a hallucination.

It will be admitted that the post of groundman is no sinecure. Much of the superfine quality of Scottish greens is due to their admirable custodians. The Caledonian greenkeeper is a born genius, somewhat independent and critical, but a man of character and judgment, possessed of a proper sense of the dignity of labour. Many groundmen are deficient in initiative, not from ignorance so much as from backwardness. This shyness should be corrected, or the habit may grow chronic. Every groundman who is up to his work does not require to be told what to do. He only needs instructions about things concerning which he cannot be expected to have any knowledge. Those who make the most efficient greenkeepers are men in the employ of green-constructors, groundmen of cricket clubs, and gardeners, in the order given. When a club desires a man, the secretary should communicate with one of the leading contractors to ascertain whether he can recommend a suitable hand. It is important that the groundman should make

himself thoroughly conversant with the laws of the game and, in his own interests, he ought to become an expert player, because he will occasionally be able to add to his wages by teaching a novice who is willing to pay for a few lessons.

When a club is fortunate enough to be served by a competent groundman, it should never part with him. Like the family doctor, he gets to know the constitution and life-history of his patient, and can treat it better than any committee can. The common difficulty is to keep the man going during the long close season. He should be placed on full wages from April 1st to October 31st, for the proper care of a fine full-sized green and the garden demands the exclusive attention of the keeper throughout the season. For one month before play begins he will be busy making ready, and for one month after play has ceased he will be occupied in repairing, altering, and cleaning up. "One green one man" is the only safe rule, so that clubs in possession of more than one green should bear this in mind. For the sake of discipline, however, it is then wiser to give to one of the men the position of Head Keeper. During the winter (when the groundman is at half-wage) the green will require attention from time to time, and, assuming that the keeper is an expert gardener, the members will be able



to procure him a good deal of private custom. Sometimes, too, knowing that winter is his slack time, an industrious keeper qualifies himself in some trade which he may follow when "lyart leaves bestrow the yird," or the roaring game is in full blast. Moreover, clubs that possess commodious pavilions hold whist drives, smoking concerts, and other social entertainments during the dead vast and middle of the weary winter, and the groundman may officiate as general utility-man at all such functions.

Bowlers are notoriously sociable and hospitable, but they must not tempt the green-keeper. The Irishman welcomed temptation, for that it gave him an opportunity to fall; but this should be denied to the groundman. They can have no objection to his smoking—it seems to fit in with his occupation,—but they should discourage tippling and tipping. It is, of course, legitimate to pay for services specially rendered (such as dressing the bowls with ronuk), but habitual tipping must be discountenanced. Human nature is human nature and, consciously or not, a groundman tipped is apt to think that he is expected to render a *quid pro quo*.

Every club owning a green worthy of the name and the fame appoints a ranger or a green rota, armed with full powers for its mainten-



ance and protection. They are administrators of the green and to them in this capacity the groundman will look for instructions. They will give him orders about matches (how many rinks will be wanted, and so forth) and it is their duty to see that the lawn is never played on when, in their judgment, the state of the weather renders it inadvisable to do so. When the committee is asked for the loan of a rink or two, or possibly for the whole green (as neutral ground for the playing of an important match or handicap), the ranger or the rota will carry out all necessary arrangements through the groundman. (In this particular it should be said, in parenthesis, that clubs in possession of perfect greens should not be chary of granting such requests, provided the occasion really justifies them. It invariably helps the game to show visiting clubs and Bowlers a green that is probably, and perhaps far, better than their own. Committees, therefore, under adequate safeguards, ought never to miss a chance of "spreading the light.") The rota will make the wearing of rubber-soled shoes imperative on the part of all players. The Australian practice of using a mat big enough to take the stride of the Bowler in the act of delivering his bowl has everything in its favour, and rangers should insist upon the use of large footers, to save the green. The ranger or rota will not

employ their powers arbitrarily or unwarrantably, although they must cultivate the strength of will to forbid play, even to themselves, when there is the smallest likelihood of the lawn suffering damage if played upon. All Bowlers recognise the ethical value of their game and learn patience and self-denial with becoming resignation. The Golden Rule is—Always give the green the benefit of the doubt.

## CHAPTER X

### THE FLOWING BOWL

“ Bools and the Man ”—The Stone Age—The Age of Wood—Excelite—What is a Bowl ?—What is Bias ?—Loading with Lead —Messrs. Barclay and Perkins’s Tudor Bowls—*Lignum vitæ*—The Making of a Bowl—The Turner’s Art—The “ Eyes,” or Ivories—The Testing-Room—Varnished—Veining of the Wood—Weight of the Bowls—Bowls in Ronuk—Too Narrow Bias—The English B.A. and Bias—What is a Standard Bowl’s Bias ?—The Proper Bias—Under-sized Bowls.

OUR Epic having now become, in *quasi*-Carlylean phraseology, *Bools and the Man*, let us consider the bowl, or tool with which the game is played. Passing from the Stone Age with the remarks elsewhere offered thereanent (p. 4), we proceed to the Age of Wood, still in lusty vigour, noting as we go, however, that there has set in a Period of Excelite, a composition bowl, highly spoken of by many players and described as of equal density throughout, well balanced, and proof against cracking and warping.

According to the *New English Dictionary*, a bowl is “ a body of hard wood, originally spherical, but now made slightly oblate on one

side and prolate on the other, so as to run with a bias." If it ever existed, the vogue of spherical bowls cannot have lasted long, for, as we know from Shakspeare and other early writers, bias was already the distinctive feature in a bowl, which was frequently referred to as the "biased bowl." The same authority defines bias as "a term at Bowls, applied alike to the construction or form of the bowl imparting an oblique motion, the oblique line in which it runs, and the kind of impetus given to cause it to run obliquely." John Norris, in his *Treatise Concerning Christian Prudence*, correctly observes that "the bowl will run, not as the Hand directs, but as the Bias leads"; and Alexander Pope, in *The Dunciad*, showed that his visits to the green had not been paid in vain :—

O thou, of bus'ness the directing soul !  
 To this our head like byass to the bowl,  
 Which, as more pond'rous, made its aim more true,  
 Obliquely waddling to the mark in view.

Horace Smith, one of the authors of *Rejected Addresses*, in his *Tin Trumpet*, neatly remarks, "It is not every rogue that, like a bowl, can gain his object the better by deviating from the straight line."

There were two ways of obtaining bias. One of these was the clumsy device of fastening lead to one side of the bowl. Did we not know

of its use from other sources, Dr. Johnson leaves us in little doubt on the subject, for, bias is, says he, "the weight lodged on one side of the bowl, which turns it from the straight line." On the other hand, Robert Recorde, the mathematician's, allusion, in the *Castle of Knowledge*, would apply indifferently to loading with lead or turning in the lathe, the alternative way by which bias was given to a bowl and now the only way. "A little altering of the one side," he remarks, "maketh the bowl to run biasse waies."

Probably the lathe was used from the first for better-class bowls. By the courtesy of Messrs. Barclay and Perkins, the famous brewers, I was privileged to examine nine bowls that were unearthed in the course of excavations for an extension of their immense premises in the ancient borough of Southwark. They are made of yew or box, and bear no trace of lead. On the contrary, the bias-bulge is very pronounced and was no doubt effected by the lathe. They are of the size of the archaic English bowl I have elsewhere (p. 144) alluded to. All things considered, they are in excellent preservation. They have, of course, lost their outward beauty—the varnish has gone; the "eyes" have vanished, though the sockets remain; and the wood has cast a few flakes. Whether they are of Tudor age,

as has been alleged, is matter of conjecture. But it was not without emotion that a Bowler of the 20th century sat in Dr. Johnson's easy-chair and handled bowls that might have swept a Southwark green what time Shakspeare was acting hard by at The Globe.

In these days, when perfect greens have raised the game to a fine art, only the best bowls will allow of scientific play, and manufacturers, on their mettle, are producing "woods" of vastly improved craftsmanship. Superior bowls are made of the finest *lignum vitæ*, a dense, heavy wood, often beautifully veined, furnished by *Guaiacum officinale*, a tree indigenous to San Domingo and other islands in the West Indies. In maturity it attains to a height of from thirty to fifty feet and its trunk measures from thirty to forty-two inches in circumference. Polished sections of the timber as well as specimens of the huge resinous tears which the tree sheds are exhibited in the museum of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, where also—in one of the houses devoted to the Economical Plants—may be seen striplings in actual growth. The heartwood is dark greenish brown in colour, and the sapwood (the wood next the bark) yellow. The timber is usually supplied to Bowl-makers in billets or logs about six feet long and ten inches in diameter.



By the permission of Messrs. F. H. Ayres, Limited, of Aldersgate Street, London, I was enabled to see the whole process of making a bowl from start to finish. Their factory is equipped with the latest tools, some of their own inventing, and employs a large number of skilled artisans. The cellars are stacked with many varieties of wood and from a log of *lignum vitæ* two portions, about six inches long, were sawn off for my benefit. These were then deprived of their sapwood by the swiftly-revolving saw and converted into polygons. In this condition they are ready for the lathe and are speedily changed by the turner, first into barrel-shaped objects and afterwards into oblate spheroids, or bowls in their roughest form.

At this stage, in the ordinary course, they would be put away in a cool, airy, well-ventilated apartment for a twelvemonth in order that the wood should become perfectly seasoned and defects, if any, disclose themselves. In the present instance, however, this interval was dispensed with for my advantage, and the turner proceeded to impart bias. The details of the process by which this is accomplished are a trade secret, but the machine acts with exquisite accuracy—as is, indeed, essential—and provides whatever bias—3, 4, or more—may be desired. The

greater the bulge or convexity the greater is the bias on a bowl. If you cannot detect the biased side of a bowl of narrow bias, hold it against the sky and you will then discover it, but on a standard bowl the bias ought to be patent to the eye. An entirely spherical bowl, it is obvious, could not circumvent any obstacle or describe a curvilinear path. No. 3 is the smallest bias allowed by law : hence on an inferior green, the Bowler, though using the same bowl, would have to allow for a narrower draw.

When the biased side of the bowl answers to the template, or testing gauge, with the utmost nicety, the ornamentation or "beading" is furnished by the appropriate instruments, and then the holes are gouged for the "eyes" or ivories—the larger hole on one side for the ivory that is to bear the initials or name of the bowler, the smaller on the other side for the ivory that is to carry the number (1, 2, 3, 4) of the bowl.

Of course the bowl has not been treated as a whole at any stage in its making ; first one half is modelled and then the other. The bowl is, however, not quite finished yet. Though the eye may not notice it, a delicate touch will detect a certain roughness of surface. This is remedied by the application of sand-paper as well as some of the shavings of this

very bowl, which, under this treatment, soon becomes as smooth as a baby's cheek. The sandpaper removes the roughness, the shavings remove any the most infinitesimal traces of grit that the sandpaper may have left.

Next, the bowl is taken to the large testing-room, the floor of which has been specially constructed to a dead level, and the bias of the bowl in movement is now rigidly tested. The track of a bowl of normal bias is marked on the floor and the new bowl must take this bias at least, on the way to the jack, before it is exposed to the finishing touches. The floor represents the green on a smaller scale and the measurements bear in every respect an exact proportion to those of an actual rink of the lawn.

Having passed this test—and not till then—a varnish, concocted according to a special recipe, is next applied which will both develop and enhance the natural beauty of the wood. Manufacturers have shown an unfortunate tendency to reduce the finished bowls to a common standard of blackness which leads most people to suppose them made of ebony. When the markings of *lignum vitæ* are remarkably fine—and this is by no means rare in bowls of the highest class—it is a pity to shroud them under a cloak of darkness.

From the time this pair of bowls was sawn

from the log until they were ready for the testing-room the process lasted a solid hour, throughout which period the turner relaxed neither vigilance nor interest. The rough blocks sawn from the log weighed 7 lbs. a piece and when finished, but without the ivory eyes (which would not materially affect their weight), turned the scale at 3 lbs. 6 oz. each. In fact in the scales the one bowl exactly balanced the other, a result that eloquently testified to the turner's skill and art.

It is impossible to say how long a bowl will continue fit for match play. I won a pair of Taylor's make in 1890 and they are still in constant use. In fact good bowls, properly cared for, will last for a very long time. At the close of the season they should be thickly smeared with ronuk and allowed to lie in this throughout the winter. The coating may be renewed, if need be. Then on the eve of the opening day the ronuk will be rubbed off—more power to your elbow!—and you will carry to the green two pairs of brilliantly-polished bowls ready for action.

Abuses of bias too frequently crop up. Bowlers in possession of bowls stamped as of No. 3 bias have been accused of getting them turned down to No. 2 or less. It is unnecessary to stigmatise such a practice. The marvel is that in a community of sports-

men it should ever have been tolerated, and it is incredible that any manufacturer of repute should aid and abet it. However, the English Bowling Association having had its attention drawn to this scandal, appointed in 1909-10 a sub-committee to investigate the methods of bias-testing employed by the leading Bowl-makers. There was reason to fear that, at the outset, a mistake in tactics might endanger the inquiry, but happily the manufacturers so far from resenting inspection, as an interference with possibly secret trade processes, welcomed it and, in the great majority of cases, facilitated the labours of the sub-committee. What the English B.A. aimed at was to prevent bowls of smaller bias than that, at least, of the standard from being placed on the market, Bowlers pleasing themselves about a wider bias, for with that the Association has no concern. In consequence of the makers' co-operation (all the more valuable that it was so largely spontaneous), it was confidently anticipated that the continued use of bowls of narrower bias than the normal would cease.

Considerable difficulty exists as to what the bias of a standard bowl really is, but the allegation that the Scottish B.A. has passed bowls drawing four and four-and-a-half feet to a thirty-yard jack on a normal green in fine





THE EAST MEADOWS BOWLING GREEN, EDINBURGH. (See p. 116.)

graph taken for Mr. John W. McHattie's "Report on Public Parks, Gardens, etc.," 1908.)





weather can have no foundation in fact. It is, however, essential that the law should explicitly state what is the bias of a standard No. 3. This should stipulate in effect that a bowl of approved bias shall draw not fewer than six feet to a thirty-yard jack on a dry green of average Scottish quality.

Under-sized bowls—of no use to any but the owners—are met with only on the poorer English greens, on which the pastime is still played according to Rule of Thumb. “Tradition,” says Whittier, “wears a snowy beard” and custom dies hard. Such bowls will probably disappear with the users of them. They are barred for three good and sufficient reasons—first, they are too small; second, they are too light; third, they have not enough bias. Doubtless, heretical timber may be seen on many greens, despite the utmost vigilance of the powers that be. Small bowls, however, never appear on Scottish greens and their use elsewhere will cure itself when lawns generally are “tuned up to concert pitch,” and the manifold subtleties of the game are universally appreciated.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE RUDIMENTS

BUYING BOWLS—SWEAR WORDS—THROWING THE JACK—Winning the Toss—Defects of the Scots Law—The English Practice—That an Unstraightened Jack is Playable—Various Names for the Jack—BIAS IN ACTION—Forehand and Backhand Play—Visualise the Track of your Bowl!—Wrong Bias—Cultivate Play on Both Hands—STYLE AND ATTITUDE—Different Attitudes considered—DELIVERING THE BOWL—Throwing and Dumping—The Right Mode of Delivery—How to Hold the Bowl—Playing on a Soft Green—"Be up" and "Take green"!

IN theory the game of Bowls is simplicity itself: the principle of play is so readily grasped and the means to an end are apparently so straightforward. What is easier to say and comprehend than that all a Bowler has to do, is to roll his bowls as close to the jack as he can, and that the player who has one or more bowls nearer than the nearest of his opponent's adds one or more shots to his score? It is easy, so *very* easy! Yet in its severely simple character lie the game's fascination and its snare. Strategy must be subtle in a sport in which the adversaries are

well matched and the tools are few and alike. But there is no royal road to excellence and he who would excel must begin at the beginning.

### BUYING THE BOWLS

What the novice has to do first, then, is to play with his own bowls. He should purchase two pairs of bowls and make a point of getting to know their behaviour in all kinds of weather on various kinds of green, for almost every pair of bowls has its own characteristics. The laws prescribe the maximum of a bowl's size ( $16\frac{1}{2}$  inches in circumference) and weight ( $3\frac{1}{2}$  pounds) and stipulate that its bias shall not be less than that of a standard bowl.

Some men have short dumpy hands and find it difficult to manipulate a very full size. Therefore, before effecting his purchase, the Bowler should handle the bowls and procure those he can hold quite comfortably. This is important, for unless he feels perfectly at ease with his weapons, he will not play as good a game as he otherwise might ; for his hands will not grow larger and the full-sized bowl will not grow smaller. And it will be useless to fall back upon the stale excuse of the poor workman and blame his tools, if he commit the initial error of buying the wrong ones. Similar

considerations apply to weight, with this proviso that it is a serious mistake to use light bowls. Try the balance of the bowl in the hand; weigh it, as it were; and if you feel that it suits your hand and goes well with the swing of the arm, that will be the weight for you. Other things being equal, however, there is every reason why the Bowler should acquire bowls of the maximum size and weight. As to bias, most players use No. 3, but I like to work with two bowls of this, and two of somewhat bigger bias.

On some English greens only one pair of bowls is used, but on all greens of capital quality on which the Scottish code is accepted, four bowls are used in singles and two and four a-side friendlies, but only two bowls in matches. Having obtained bowls to his liking, the player should induce a friend to coach him in the art of drawing to the jack. At first he should play with men who are decidedly his superiors and study their play. Much in that way is to be learnt,—as well what to eschew as what to emulate.

### SWEAR WORDS

Leigh Hunt says, in his *Autobiography*, that, while disclaiming any special merit for the fact, swearing was, somehow or other, never

a habit in his family. When he was a boy, being anxious to know what it was like, he once snatched a fearful joy in the utterance of the words, "Damn it." For long afterwards he felt quite miserable and every time he was praised and patted on the head, he could not help thinking, "Ah! they little suspect that I am the boy who said 'Damn it.'"

Speaking for myself, I have seldom found Bowls provocative. During a captaincy of twenty-five years, complaint was only once made to me by one of my skips of the language used by his opponent. I advised him to remonstrate quietly with the offender rather than make an official thing of it. The culprit, it appeared, was a village blacksmith and probably garnished his talk without meaning much harm.

Why are some games more stimulative to "swear words" than others? I state it simply as my experience and not at all as a matter of boasting, that unparliamentary language is not customary on Bowling greens. Now, in golf usage is quite different, not excluding even the cloth. There is the well-known story of the man who asked a caddie on St. Andrews links whether he had seen Principal Tulloch on the course. "Ou, ay!" answered the caddie, "ye'll find him oot by, teein' his ba' an' damnin' awfu'!" When the Rev.



John McNeill, the well-known missionary, was learning gowff, his partner on one occasion uttered a hearty "Damn." Thereupon the minister laid his hand on his rival's shoulder and said, "My friend, that stroke wasn't worth a damn." Whether as rebuke or criticism, or both, that subtle retort was perfect.

So far as the green is concerned, however, Bowlers will probably agree with Bob Acres that "damns have had their day." Yet were this circumstance to be used in prejudice of the game, it might be necessary to consider the situation from the point of view of wee Leigh Hunt.

### THROWING THE JACK

At the beginning of a game, the jack is tossed for by the leaders. If you win the toss, throw the jack. This is a purely conventional use of the word, for the jack is really rolled along the green. In a single-handed game, it would be foolish to allow your adversary the privilege of throwing the jack you had won, and in a rink-set it is only the conceited skip who bids his leader let his opponent have the jack. Such a skip "fancies" himself as a player of the last bowl, and he secures this right by giving up the jack, although his leader has won the toss. It is a

distinct advantage for a leader to play to a clear jack, and *he* should have consideration and not the skip. Nevertheless, as a matter of discipline, should the skip insist upon his vanity being humoured, the leader has no alternative but to hand over the jack to his rival. But, as a rule, if you win the jack you will be allowed to throw it.

It is one of the courtesies of the game for the leader who does not throw the jack to place the mat from which the jack is thrown and the bowls are delivered. This custom is to be respected at the beginning of every end. The mat should be placed quite straight and in the centre of the rink in a line with the plate which bears the number of the rink and indicates the exact middle of the space. At the start the mat will be laid down about three feet from the ditch, but in all later heads it must either be placed where the jack lay when the previous end was finished, provided it be centred in a horizontal line with that spot, or placed at any place backwards between that point and the ditch; it must never be laid in front of the spot where the jack lay.

Decidedly the slovenliest habit the Bowler can be guilty of is an indolent way of throwing the jack. This fault exists on all greens, but I am not sure that the greatest sinners are not to be found in Scottish clubs. The jack *must*

be thrown at least twenty-five yards from the mat (a minimum jack) and not farther than two yards from the ditch (a maximum jack). No objection can be taken to these limits which, in the case of a full-sized green, forty-two yards square, afford a margin of twelve to fourteen yards for jacks of varying length, though it is an open question whether twenty-three yards would not prove a more useful minimum. The monotony of bowling to jacks of uniform length, whether long or short, will scarcely be disputed. Every Bowler should accustom himself to throwing jacks of all lengths—short, medium, and long,—for the art is useful in singles and matches alike; and he should always try to throw the jack straight up the rink, making it follow an imaginary line bisecting the space into two equal portions.

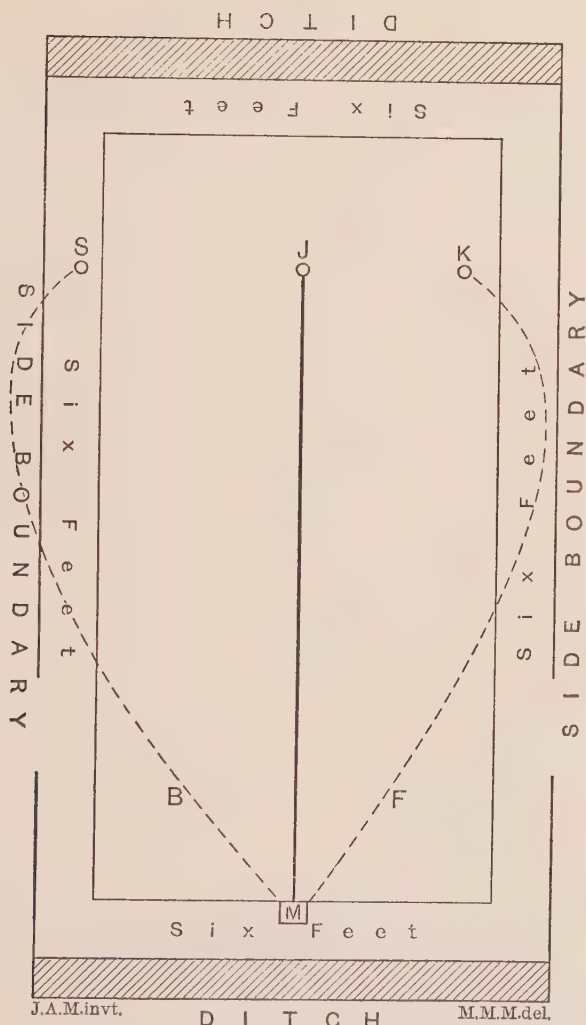
With singular want of thought, the Scottish lawgivers stipulated that when the jack is thrown “less than two yards from the ditch it should be *moved out* to that distance.” Instead of requiring it, in that event, to be thrown afresh by the other side, the law positively rewards the slovenly thrower by giving him a maximum jack to bowl to. And I venture to assert that a full-length jack is probably the very jack a player of that sort likes best. When, therefore, he has obtained

possession of the jack, he has only to throw it nearly into the ditch and he will always get a full-length jack,—until he happens to lose an end.

But this is not the only foul throw for which the slovenly player may plead legislative countenance, for in another section of the law it is declared that if the jack “run to one side it *shall be moved* straight across and placed in the line of the pins numbering the rinks.” This moving of the jack by some one not the thrower is a direct incentive to slovenliness. In order to appreciate the laxity of the Scots law, however, it will be helpful to consider the custom that once prevailed—and is not yet extinct—amongst clubs in London and the South of England. They recognised what the Scottish legislators missed, namely, that the provisions as to a maximum jack supplied a clue to the treatment of a jack which, when it had ceased running, was wide of the median line. If a full-length jack must be six feet from the ditch, why not adapt that requirement to the side boundaries also? Accordingly this became almost the universal custom in the South and Midlands. So regarded, a jack was a legal jack which when it came to rest was twenty-five yards from the mat and at least six feet from all boundaries, that is, from the ditch and each of the side threads or strings. There

was absolute precision in such practice. The player was obliged to throw a jack that complied with clearly defined conditions, and the moving (or kicking) of the jack into the central line was therefore not only unnecessary but strictly forbidden, and, in point of fact, unknown. On greens where this custom obtained, it did not pay to be slovenly, because the leader tried to throw the jack which he or his side preferred.

That a jack which is off the straight may yet be readily played to can be demonstrated both by English practice and, *mirabile dictu*, Scottish rules. In the accompanying diagram the position before bowling, according to these laws, is represented by the vertical median line MJ, where M is the mat and J the jack. No matter how far from the middle line the jack had rolled (within the limits of the rink), it is always moved, in the Scottish custom, to the central line. Suppose it had been thrown to the spot K, which is more than six feet from the end and side boundaries, it would not, in the old English practice, be moved out to the middle line, but be played to where it lies. The course of the bowl on the forehand, MFK, shows that this is easily possible without breach of any law, and so followers of the ancient English game suffer the jack to remain where it has been thrown. How-



THE UNSTRAIGHTENED JACK.



ever, should it come to rest within the six-feet limit, they move it as far out as that distance, but no farther. Now, consider a position that frequently arises on greens where the Scots laws are in vogue. Imagine that the third man's first bowl has "cut" the jack to S. Though now only four feet from the side boundary, it is still alive, *and must be played to*. The track MBS shows how it may be reached even on the backhand, for though the bowl has travelled outside of the side boundary altogether, this is legitimate as long as it returns within the playing space before it has ceased to run: should it remain outside, it becomes a dead bowl, and must be removed to the end bank.

In consequence of the vicious system that has grown up under the ægis of the Scots law, many Bowlers throw the jack "anyhow," knowing that it will be centred. I have seen it flung with a jerk from the level of the hip as if it were a missile, or chucked diagonally into an adjoining rink. On many greens, so thoroughly has sheer laziness become ingrained, two jacks are requisitioned, one for each end of the playing space. This indolent custom has the further drawback that it tends to foster playing to jacks of uniform length, and this of full size.

Yet there is a virtue even in the throwing

of a jack. It is not thrown for the fun of the thing, but should be delivered with as much care as the bowl. The object of throwing it is threefold. In the first place, it conveys to the player some hint of strength and length; secondly, he (or his side) may have a preference for a jack of given length, and he will naturally endeavour to throw it accordingly; and thirdly, he will soon discover, if he keep his weather-eye open, that his opponent also has a preference, and will therefore, as a wise man, make it his business to throw a baulking jack. It must surely be plain that these advantages are neutralised by the sloven. It is equally clear that no Bowler will ever become a proficient leader who ignores them, and may even jeopardise his chance of a place in a match team. Therefore the surest method of training leaders is strictly to discourage the random throwing of the jack in the ordinary daily play. In Bowls it is as easy to acquire good style as bad, and it ought to be a mere truism to insist that there is a right way of throwing the jack.

“Jack,” in the Bowler’s sense, is at least as old as Shakspeare (p. 18). It was also formerly called the “block,” the “mark,” and the “mistress,” which last designation may perhaps explain the name of “kitty,” as generic for “woman,” by which it is known

in some quarters. None of the lexicographers recognises "kitty" as a synonym for "jack," and one would rather expect any word-play of this sort to have yielded the form "jill." There is a Scots diminutive "kitty" meaning "a small bowl" (basin), and mayhap some wiseacre, "rushing in where angels fear to tread," confounded the bowls and unblushingly gave us "kitty" as an alternative to "jack." But I think that "kitty" as generic for "woman," deriving through "mistress," is the most probable explanation.

#### BIAS IN ACTION

To the beginner bias necessarily presents some difficulty. Bias, he has learned, is on the bowl, not "on the green," as is said of the crown-green game. At first he may think to attain the jack by delivering his bowl straightforward upon it. Let him do so by way of experiment and instruction, and he will soon see the bowl curving away to the right or left in obedience to the bias, and anywhere rather than towards the jack. Similarly, were his bowls spherical, without bias at all, he would only need mentally to measure the length of the jack and gauge the strength of the green—and abandon Bowls for ever, as a puerile pastime. For the want of bias

transforms the ruling principle of the game into something purely mechanical at the best.

Now, bias in action introduces a cardinal feature—the two methods of play which every Bowler must cultivate, namely, the forehand and backhand (Fig. 1). These he must assiduously study, knowing no rest on the green until he has completely mastered both. Forehand play consists in bowling on the right hand from the mat to the jack, and backhand in bowling on the left. (All Bowlers naturally left-handed will simply reverse these actions—their forehand would be on the left from mat to jack, their backhand on the right.) What the Bowler virtually does is to picture in his mind's eye a straight line between the mat and the jack, and then deliver the bowl a few feet on the right of such a line for forehand play, or a few feet on the left for backhand. Every Bowler should acquire the capacity of *visualising the track of the bowl he is about to deliver* to suit the precise position of things at the moment. That is why Bowlers like a well-lighted green.

Just how many feet the bowl will draw depends upon several things, of which the player must take cognisance. The chief considerations are (a) the state of the green, (b) the length of the jack, and (c) the amount of bias his bowls carry. After wet weather the

green will be heavy and draw less bias ; in hot weather it will pull the normal bias (Fig. 1); and after a long-continued spell of heat, it

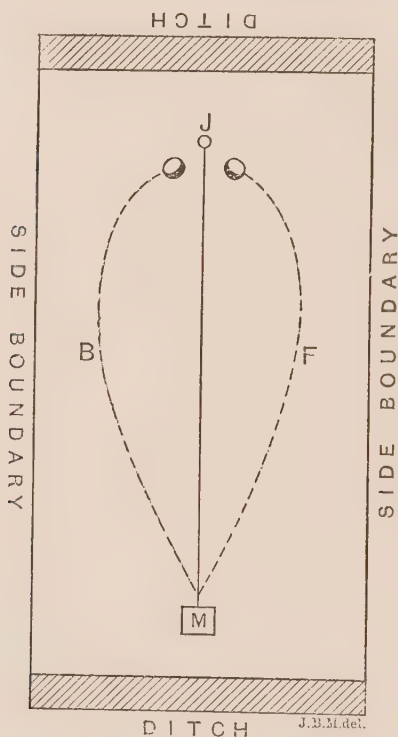


FIG. 1.—BIAS ACTING NORMALLY.

MFJ, Fore ; MBJ, Back hand.

will play so fast that it will draw the heaviest bias his bowls can take.

Before delivering it the player ought to

glance at the bowl to see that he is playing with and not against the bias, whether on the fore or the back hand. The rule is ex-

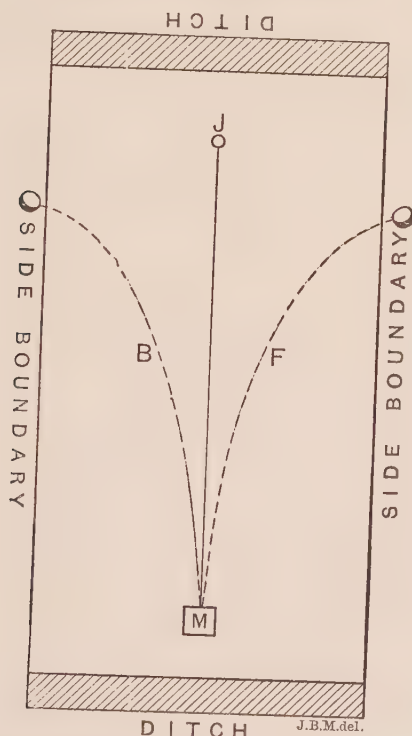


FIG. 2.—WRONG BIAS.

Bowl on Fore hand, F, has been delivered with Back hand bias.  
 „ Back „ B, „ „ „ Fore „ „

tremely simple—whether he play fore hand or whether he play back, he must always keep the biassed half of the bowl innermost.



If he neglect this precaution, he may afford the spectators great amusement without benefiting his side in the least (Fig. 2). Veterans occasionally make this mistake, and I have seen a case of wrong bias even in an international game.

Moreover, the novice must be careful not to force the bias in any way. The bias will act of itself at the proper moment. Whenever I have noticed a Bowler give the bowl a sort of twist in the article of delivery, I have invariably found on inquiry that, before taking up Bowls, the player had been a bowler in a cricket club. I was always assured either that he was unconscious of the action or did it from force of habit. In any case it is a defect, and must be corrected.

There is a natural preference for forehand play, because in bowling to the right the arm swings without effort with the body, while in backhand play the arm has to cross the body with a swing in which there is more or less conscious effort, with perhaps an unacknowledged sense of awkwardness, in order to deliver the bowl to the left. Yet it is so essential to be able to play either hand freely, that I do not exaggerate the importance of the art when I impress on every beginner the three things necessary to make a Bowler—first, forehand and backhand play; second,

forehand and backhand play ; third, forehand and backhand play. Nevertheless, because forehand play is, so to speak, a natural movement, responding readily to the poise and swing of the human frame, many Bowlers obstinately acquire it, and it alone. In answer to repeated remonstrances, they have declared their inability to play backhand, as if it were something that demanded exceptional study, like the binomial theorem or the Russian language, for which they had neither time nor inclination. But it must be said plainly once for all that every Bowler who does not cultivate backhand as well as forehand play knows only half of the art and science of the game and misses more than half of its charm. What would this uninstructed Bowler think of a batsman who could only hit to “ leg ” and “ on,” and refused to learn cutting and “ off ” play ?

### STYLE AND ATTITUDE

Another gift the beginner should acquire is a graceful, easy delivery. Not that a becoming style will of itself make a Bowler—on the contrary, many crack players have desperately ugly styles,—but a man plays none the worse for feeling free, comfortable, and unconstrained. It is also a boon to the spectators.

There was nothing more attractive to watch than the supreme ease with which Frank Shatford, of Kettering, drew to the jack in his contest with M. Turner, of Carlisle, on the fine green of the Upper Clapton Club on July 25th, 1910; and there was constant pleasure in following the perfect grace of John Forman, of Edinburgh; or the lissom elegance of J. R. Chapman, of Sunderland, and Sam Windrim, of Belfast; or the supple deliveries of Harry Childs, of Reading; or the deadly *insouciance* of J. S. Emmerson, of Carlisle Edenside B.C.; or the art-concealing-art liveliness of James Gillespie Carruthers.

Whether a great player or only an indifferent one, every Bowler adopts his own attitude at the mat: it is, in fact, the thing that gives him individuality. It would, therefore, be absurd to affirm positively that one position was more helpful than another. Speaking generally, however, one of five positions is favoured—the upright, the stoop, the stride, the kneeling, and the “hunkerswise.” In the first, the bowler stands bolt upright, visualises the track he wishes his bowl to pursue (especially studying—as all Bowlers must, no matter what their attitude—whatever his skip may have asked him to do), and then, having laid his plan, takes one step forwards, drops easily and delivers his bowl with a free and yet

deliberate sweep of the arm, the swing being carried through and completed after the bowl has left his hand. In the second, the Bowler stands on the mat, his body bent in a stooping posture and his bowl almost touching the green. When he has taken in the situation, he delivers the bowl with scarcely any action. Though it may look a stiff and constrained attitude, it is largely affected. The stride, which is commonly adopted by Bowlers who stand six feet in their socks, is a modification of the stoop. With one foot on the mat, the player takes an enormous stride forwards with the other and holds the bowl almost on the turf. Having surveyed his land, he then launches the wood. In the fourth, the Bowler, resting his hand on his left knee, appears to kneel on the mat with his right leg, and so delivers the bowl. This attitude ensures much steadiness of aim. In the fifth, the player bends his left leg and appears to sit on the heels of his right, which is drawn up beneath him, but does not fall into the kneeling position; then he delivers the bowl either without change of position, or, rising slightly, takes a short step forwards and launches the bowl. Attitude, as I have hinted, is a matter of taste, but as a beginner must adopt some attitude, and I use the upright myself, I need not hesitate to recommend him to cultivate

it. The fifth, or "hunkers" fashion, has always struck me as ungainly and needlessly cramping the Bowler, and the learner may at least dispense with *it*.

### DELIVERING THE BOWL

If the golfer who hacks and hews, not the putting green but the outfield, is looked upon as a pariah by his fellows, it is by comparison impossible to designate the Bowler whose clumsy carelessness "skins" the Bowling green, which is as much superior to the putting green as the latter is to the outfield. Yet the Bowler far more easily than the golfer can avoid any damage to the turf. Injury to the green is almost entirely caused by faulty delivery of the bowl. Beginners err through ignorance, and older players through culpable laziness and indifference. The former throw, the latter dump the bowl, and just as the perpetual drip-drip of water will hollow out the hardest stone, a succession of such deliveries continued over even a short space of time will infallibly strip the grass and make bare patches and indentations big enough to modify the exact running of the "woods." The whole art of right delivery consists in getting well down to the surface of the green and, in the very act of launching the bowl,

taking care that *the hand and turf make one plane*. Thus delivered, the bowl should glide from the hand, like a ship's hull from the builder's slip. There should not be the shadow of a suspicion of a throw. One may always tell when a bowl has been imperfectly delivered, though perhaps not actually thrown. When it begins its career with a wobbling action and "shows its eyes," this is a certain sign that the bowler has been too hasty. It may be said without exaggeration that every defect in the delivery affects to some extent the true course of the bowl. Occasionally the bowl may right itself, but even then it does not perform its work so effectively as it would had it been despatched on its way without a hitch.

Therefore, the beginner must learn from the very first to roll and not pitch the bowl. In the case of old players the defect is usually past remedy, for they will not take the necessary trouble to bend low enough to enable the hand to form a true plane with the turf. Their conduct is really reprehensible, for probably they began and continued for years to deliver their bowls well and truly. It is when they put on flesh and fancy their knees are stiff that so many of them will not stoop, but send the bowl to the green with a dump. From close observation of several of these hardened sinners, I am satisfied they need never acquire



the habit in the first place, and, in the second, may readily cure it if it grow upon them unconsciously. These dumpers do so much harm to the lawn that one must frankly confess their active participation in the game has ceased to be desirable.

From what has been said about the damage done by throwing the bowl, Bowls should be forbidden on a soft green, when the turf has become sodden and relaxed by heavy rain and is in such a tender state that it responds very quickly to usage that might not affect a dry green. Whenever one can trace the track of bowls, like the wake of a steamer, it is certain play has been going on when the ground was too damp and when the ranger or rota should have closed the green.

In delivering the bowl, it should be held a *leetle* loosely in the palm of the hand and "steadied" in its place by the thumb and forefinger. One sometimes hears of the "Bowler's grip." The expression is unhappy, since it implies that the bowl should be held tightly. There is, however, one shot in which it is really necessary to hold the bowl very firmly, and that is the drive. In the case of all other deliveries ease of handling the bowl rather than any method of holding it with a grip is essential, if the bowl is to run from the hand with a free and graceful course towards

the jack. And, by the by, though the player should not be in a hurry to deliver his bowl, he must at the same time beware of mentally studying his intended course too long: in such event he is in danger of "oversighting" himself, and his bowl will probably run either too narrow and short, or too wide and strong.

### "BE UP"

"Never up, never in" is the standing caution to the tyro in golf when he has reached the putting green. Similarly, "Be up" is one of the earliest pieces of advice to be tendered to the young Bowler. For weak play to the jack is the besetting sin of every beginner, almost without exception. Happily this failing, though serious, lends itself to easy remedy. It arises almost inevitably from ignorance of the precise amount of force required to send the bowl from the mat towards the other end of the green. Nevertheless, the defect must be cured without delay, for it is one of the worst faults a Bowler can commit, since the blocking of the draw to the jack, either on the fore or back hand, not only spoils his own game but that of his fellows, while in a match it is heart-breaking to the skip. For though short play is the brand of the novice, I have seen it on the part of leaders even in inter-

national matches, when, of course, it is due to temporary failure of nerve. The beginner will be well advised to play strongly to the jack, for if his bowl should run beyond the tee, at all events it can do no harm there, being out of everybody's road, and may even become useful ; and, moreover, in actual experience it is found easier to moderate the force of strong play than to work up from feebleness to the proper length. A bowl is better in the ditch than too short, for a short bowl catches the eye of the later Bowlers until the end is played out, besides being an obstacle of no value whatever to the player's side. Full length and full bias are priceless in Bowling. One must therefore inculcate these maxims repeatedly on every beginner—" Be up " and " Take green " !

## CHAPTER XII

### THE RINK GAME

The word "Rink"—The Quartet of Players—He who Must be Obeyed—Discipline and Combination—THE LEADER—THE SECOND PLAYER—Card of the Match—THE THIRD MAN—THE SKIP—Knowledge of Human Nature—The Unsuitable Man—"What do you see?"—Discreet Praise of his Men—The Noisy Skip—The Policy of Firing—Carrying the Jack—The Question of Guarding—Watch the Measure—Win Well and Lose Well—"Touchers"—Spat upon *Honoris Causa*—"Ditchers"—The "Live Jack"—English Practice Preferable—The Captain.

It is unfortunate that the word "rink" is used in a twofold sense in Bowls. Sometimes it is employed to describe the playing space, and sometimes it implies the quartet of men who play upon it. Usually the context renders the meaning clear, yet it were better to reserve the term for the four players, and call the section of the green upon which they play "the space," which, as it happens, is not used otherwise in connection with the game.

Four players, we have just said, constitute

a rink. These are called, in Bowler's parlance, the leader, the second, the third man, and the skip, director, or driver. The last-named is the general, and upon his skill, strategy, and play will depend the success or failure of the rink. He is commonly blamed, and perhaps on the whole justly, for failure, and commonly praised, and perhaps on the whole too exclusively, for success. At any rate, it is more probable that failure has resulted from his defective strategy than from collapse of all four players, while success is generally due to good play by one or more of his colleagues as well as to generalship and play on his part. However, he is in charge of the rink, and his men must obey him implicitly. Even when the event proves to demonstration that the driver's judgment was at fault; even though the player in the act of play feels sure that the instruction with which he is about to comply is a grave mistake, still the skip must be obeyed at all costs. In the rink game there is no room for the individualist, for it presupposes combination for a given object which has been thought out by the skip and towards which each of his men is expected to devote his best skill and attention. This is, indeed, the beauty of the game. The building up of an end ought to prove a subject of interest to all four men engaged in it.

None of the quartet plays a more important part than the first man, or

LEADER.

For the skip can initiate no plan of campaign until he has obtained a bowl that is likely either to count or to be of value to him in the development of a scheme. The first thing the leader must do is to throw the jack. He will, of course, throw one to which either he or his rink may be partial. Nay more, he must watch the length of jack that his rival prefers—it may be a baby one, it may be a full-length,—so that he may throw one of the reverse length when he has the privilege. The skip should not presume to direct his leader, who has, indeed, been selected for the position because of his customary skill in playing to a clear jack. I have little faith in any skip who interferes at this early stage, yet I have seen one actually show his leader both the hand and the ground! That is playing the grandfather with a vengeance and treating the leader as a very little boy. The leader will always do best whom his skip leaves perfectly untrammelled. He knows as well as the skip does that the only man he has to beat is the leader opposed to him, and he should be permitted to do this without let or hindrance. The leader must play to the jack,



must go all the way to it, on no account falling short in either draw. He will try to lie on the jack, either immediately in front or immediately behind. Should he succeed in gaining one of these positions with his first bowl, he will probably have no difficulty in securing the other with his second. Even if the leader be somewhat too strong with both bowls, no great harm will have been done. For any shortcomings in respect of finer or closer play can always be made good by the

#### SECOND PLAYER.

Some Bowlers affect to regard this position as derogatory. That is all nonsense. Of course every Bowler believes himself to be either a born skip or a born lead, but, granting this, every player in a rink is "cast" for a definite *rôle*; each man's responsibility is as great as his fellow's, and he is expected (by England, or his club—it doesn't matter which) to do his duty. It is quite true that if a skip has a man of whose play he is a little in doubt, he will place him in the second line, because in that position he can do himself most justice and the rink least harm. Hence this player has been called the "soft second," solely for the reason just given.

The fact is you cannot play more than four men in a rink, and one of them has got to be

second. A player who feels slighted at being required to fill this place is either an indifferent sportsman, or else overlooks a most important consideration. Let him forget for the nonce that he is one of four, and assume that he is playing second in a pairs competition, and he must surely realise that his position is both honourable and responsible. This, in truth, is the view which every second should take and, so regarded, it will be evident that he has been assigned a post in which he may render signal service to his skip and his side.

As a rule, the skip will begin his course of active instruction with the second player, of whom as much may be demanded as of the leader—and possibly even more. For his may be the privilege of compensating for any deficiency of the first man's play. The second should therefore be equally versed in drawing to the actual jack, or to a spot on the green which the skip will indicate, and to which he will be requested to play *as to the jack itself*. Take the case mentioned of the leader having played both of his bowls too forcibly. The skip has two back "woods," but no shot. The second may be bidden either to draw to the jack on a given hand, or carry the jack towards the back bowls: the situation (which is by no means rare) will afford any player a legitimate chance of distinguishing himself.

To the second is deputed the duty of keeping the score of his rink. The score is agreed at every end, and the second of the side that has won the head calls out to his skip (who is at the other end of the green) the score and the number of ends played. This duty must never be neglected; otherwise, should his side be falling behind, the skip, in ignorance of the score, might leave his effort to save the situation till it were too late.

Ordinarily a match comprises twenty-one ends, but it may be agreed to play twenty-five or other number. The second will be careful to note that a tie end, while yielding no point to either side, nevertheless counts an end and must be marked "tie"; while a case of "no end"—as when the jack has been driven out of bounds, or a bowl has been "burned" and the opposite party claims a fresh head—of course, does not count. The number of rinks taking part in a match is commonly three or four, but it may be as few as one, or as many as six or eight (or the full number, whatever this be, which the green will accommodate). Four rinks a-side, however, provide a very excellent game and do not impose unduly upon the hospitality of the entertaining club. It is usual either to interrupt a match at "half-time" for refreshment, or for the home player to take his rival to the canteen at the psycho-

logical moment. I think the latter the better plan. Indeed, I have seen a rink fall to pieces after an interval for drinks, not in consequence of the copiousness of the draughts or the potency of the liquor, but for the more prosaic reason that they have lost their "feel" of the green and "sight" of the jack, and their poor play renders them panic-stricken.

To resume the main subject, from which we have drifted to discuss matches and the second player's duty as scorer. The

### THIRD MAN

ought to be almost if not quite as good a man as the skip, for whom, in point of fact, he deputises when occasion demands (as when the skip goes to the mat to play, or leaves the green for a glass of ginger beer). On this account he generally stands at the jack along with the skip, so that the two may exchange views about any situation that may call for exceptional play. This custom originated in Scotland, but, on the whole, it has little to recommend it. If the skip is worthy of his position, he should not need a counsellor; if he is inferior to the third man, the two ought to change places in the next match. Repeated consultations waste time and do not always result in agreement. Moreover, the skip may, at any juncture, summon a player from the

mat to look at the lie of the " woods " before delivering his bowl. What may be required of the third man when his turn shall come it is impossible to conjecture, as it entirely depends upon the then aspect of things. His all-round proficiency having been postulated, he is expected to be equal to any emergency. He may have a " soft thing on," or the position may be so desperate as to make the highest possible demand on his resourcefulness. One point is, therefore, evident : the third man must have plenty of nerve.

#### THE SKIP,

driver, or director of a rink, is not put into that post casually. No Bowler should be elected to serve as skip excepting for specific reasons patent to his fellows. Though he fills the position of an autocrat he must not wield his power autocratically. He may not be, and often is not the best player in the club, but he should be there or thereabouts : let us say, among the best. He ought to know the laws by heart and be able to cite the rubric for or against any disputed point that may crop up during play. He must be a thorough general, quick to seize possibilities, sagacious to conceal his plan as long as may be from his adversary, and of sound judgment so that he may settle promptly the best line of play at any

crisis. He must be a man of the world and have a sympathetic knowledge of human nature. Peevish, cross-grained, ill-tempered, dour men are by nature unqualified for a post in which tact and the gift of managing men are supremely essential.

Occasionally a skip may notice one of his men more interested in an adjoining rink or game than in his own, and will be justified in quietly checking such "slackness," but to lecture or hector a man "before folk" is the blundering of a bully. When a diplomatic skip has set a player a task which the latter doesn't like, or if he is not himself quite sure of the best possible shot to attempt, he will always allow the man a chance of offering a counter-opinion. "What do you see?" he asks, and should the skip believe the alternative plan sufficiently promising he will sanction it. The young player should not stand in awe of his skip, but regard him as a guide, philosopher, and friend, and solicit advice and instruction whenever he feels the need of it.

W. W. Mitchell set a high value on the skip's knowledge of human nature. "Never disparage the play of your own side," he wrote, "but rather try to find something to commend in every bowl [save a really bad one: for indiscriminate praise is worthless and depreciates eulogy of shots that deserve



approval]—‘ the very length,’ ‘ well-greened,’ ‘ a good guard,’ ‘ the best back one,’ ‘ the very place,’ ‘ you for a player !’ ‘ you have played before !’ etc. etc.” He goes on to say that the play of opponents may be spoken of lightly, provided it be done genially by way of banter. I do not endorse this opinion, if only because the skip has nothing to do with the play of the other side, and should leave it to be dealt with by the rival skip. Nevertheless, while encouraging his men by discreet praise of good shots, the skip should not be too demonstrative. A noisy skip is a nuisance, not perhaps so much to his own rink, who have been broken in to his eccentricities, as to players in adjoining rinks, who might be disturbed by wild yells or ludicrous gestures.

As last player grave responsibility rests upon the skip, whose last bowl may have to avert disaster in the shape of a heavy adverse score, to save, or to win a game. Being the tactician of his rink, he not only closely superintends his own men’s play and watches the vicissitudes of every end, but also keenly observes the plan and play of the rival general. Years of play may not make a competent skip, for much depends on the man apart from the player, upon his gift of strong, swift and sure decision, upon his handling of his fellows. In

short, the ideal skip, like the poet, is born and not made.

Exactly what he may have to achieve when his turn comes, it is impossible to forecast here. He may have to accomplish a perfect draw to prevent a large score on the other side. This will seldom be an easy task, because it is very unlikely that the draw will be clear on either hand after twelve or fourteen bowls have been despatched towards the jack. Sometimes, however, a port may be negotiable by a fine draw; sometimes it may be possible to reach the jack by a cannon from another bowl, the "chap and lie" of Bowlers' jargon, conveyed, in turn, from the roaring game; sometimes the first place may be gained by a "follow-through" shot by drawing rather heavily upon a bowl that blocks the path, and forcing it up the green, while the player's own bowl continues to run towards the jack. But it is idle to pursue surmise further.

One stroke falls to the lot of the skip pretty often and that is the drive. It comes to him, because he must never allow an earlier player to fire. A hostile bowl on the jack seems to have an irritating effect upon certain skips, who do not scruple to bid, it may be, the second man "pick off this bowl." The position can be more effectually dealt with otherwise than by sacrificing at least one bowl of

the skip's side. In driving the bowl is well set up in the player's hand and delivered with enough strength to overcome or destroy the bias for the moment. If the skip *must* fire, he will not hesitate to do so, for to be in two minds about the policy of driving is to invite failure. But do not fire at random; let the target be clearly sighted, lest the driver strike the wrong object—with sad results. Firing demands a keen eye and sure hand, and is almost forbidden if the skip have neglected to call for back bowls from one or other of his players. No skip should make a habit of driving, since excessive resort to it inevitably spoils his hand for the finer shades of play frequently necessary towards the close of an end. Having to kill the bias of his bowl when firing, a skip who glories in his prowess as a rider, unconsciously falls into the mode of drawing with narrow bias and ultimately becomes useless unless he abandon the error of his ways.

Probably the deadliest and most brilliant shot the skip may have to execute is to carry the jack to a cluster of bowls of his own men. Such a position, however, should seldom arise, because no alert skip will allow his rival to accumulate a number of bowls at any spot where they might conceivably count against him, and will rather take the precaution to mix two or

three bowls of his own amongst the others. Still, the opportunity does occur, and the skip who is able to take full advantage of the trail may reap a rich harvest.

Upon the question of protecting a shot by guarding it with another bowl, there is some difference of opinion, although there is a consensus that it is feeble policy to do so in the ordinary development of an end. A guard posted early is a bowl wasted. But there are exceptions to every rule. Suppose the jack driven into the ditch and a bowl not a "toucher" on the brink, become shot in consequence of the fresh complexion put upon the lie of the woods by the carry, it would be legitimate to endeavour to guard this, since it should be easier to play a defending bowl rather than try for a second shot, with the chance of being a trifle too strong and sending the shot into the ditch—and the fresh bowl, too. When the skip wishes a block he will issue express orders to that effect, and indicate where he wishes the bowl to rest: otherwise no Bowler should attempt to play a guard of his own accord.

After the skip has played the last bowl of an end, the score is agreed and entered on the card, the skip meanwhile laying the mat on the bank. Should any measurement be necessary, this will be done by a player on

each side (in Australian practice the third men are nominated to this duty, and this is to be recommended), the other players watching that the measuring is carried out with scrupulous fairness. The mere fact of such a test's being necessary implies that there is little to choose between the bowls in question, and the string held not so taut to one bowl as to another might give the shot to the latter, when perhaps there was actually a tie. When the bowls are near enough to enable mechanical measurers (such as callipers) to be employed, these are always the most satisfactory, since they can be very accurately adjusted and cannot easily be tampered with. In the case of measurement, there must be absolute agreement on both sides before either bowl is disturbed.

Had I not seen too many instances to the contrary, I should not have presumed to counsel the skip to win modestly and to lose with temper. It seems as difficult for some men to lose with dignity as to win with equanimity. Some skips have a good "conceit of themselves"; the vanity of some is amusing, that of others offensive. Every failure is "hard lines," every success is self-lauded to the skies, and their impatience of well-intended criticism too often takes the form of a sneer at the "wonderful play on



the banks.” Crowing over a victory is ill-mannered, while to sulk, or betray annoyance at defeat is ill-natured. The skip of evenly-balanced mind is sure to congratulate his rival upon a victory well won, and if the latter cannot find something kindly to say of his opponent, he must either be inordinately vain or the play must have been really poor.

Scottish Bowlers were the inventors of one of the most conspicuous features of the rink game, namely, “touchers” and their corollaries, “ditchers,” and the vitality of the jack wherever it may be carried or driven within the limits of the space, until the end is played out. These three features have even been erected into a triad of fetishes. A toucher is a bowl which, in the course of its original career, has hit or touched the jack—the merest almost imperceptible brush will suffice. It must be gently marked with a chalk cross by the skip as soon as it has come to a standstill: unless it is so marked before the second next bowl is delivered it cannot be claimed as a toucher. Although it may have collided with one or more bowls before it touches the jack, it is still a toucher; but should a bowl be forced on to the jack by another bowl, such a bowl is not a toucher. A toucher must be active, not passive. In virtue of being a toucher, it is alive until the



close of the head, no matter where it may lie within the limits of the space, even if it run into the ditch in its original course, or be driven into it by a succeeding bowl, directly or indirectly.

It is difficult to see how touchers advantage the game. A leader playing to a clear jack often succeeds in touching the mark, and, at this stage of the game, the feat is one of commonplace dexterity, demanding no special reward on its merits. But it is by no means certain that this may not have been the *fons et origo* of the feature, for W. W. Mitchell asserts that, in the infancy of touchers, the bowl was marked not by chalk but in a "more primitive mode." The player, he says, "felt proud to hear his driver exclaim, 'That one deserves a spittle,' and accordingly it had this, by way of distinction, put upon it." To be spat upon is universally regarded as a sign of the most undisguised contempt; but Bowls is unique in affording an example of an exhortation being accepted *honoris causa*, as if it were a medal at an International Exhibition!

There is even a certain injustice in touchers that savours of poor sportsmanship. Suppose, for instance, the leader has delivered his bowl with unnecessary strength and that it just brushes the jack and then runs into the ditch, it may be, some eighteen feet farther on. That

was really a bad bowl, but the skip, with all the gravity imaginable, stoops to decorate it with a cross. Of course, this bowl might become most valuable in the event of the jack's being driven to keep it company in the ditch; but few skips would discover in the fact of a leader's bowl lying in the ditch, a clue to building up the end on such lines as to make the bowl count in the score. A toucher in the ditch can only be disturbed by another toucher's coming into contact with it and altering its position, or by the jack being driven against it in the course of play.

"Ditchers" and the "live jack" follow as a matter of course from touchers. For this reason all dead bowls—those which have run into the ditch without touching the jack or have been driven into it, and are hence called ditchers—must be removed to the bank as soon as they fall into the ditch.

Actually the "live jack" is another questionable feature. It is conceivable that a leader might deliberately try to drive or carry the jack into the ditch at every head. In so doing he would be acting within the letter of the law as well as in a mischievous and perverse spirit. That such a gross abuse could take place under the statutes shows that the doctrine of the "live jack" transcends the bounds of legitimate sportsmanship.

Advocates of the Scottish view maintain that the maxim "the jack never dies" (within the bounds of the space) penalises indiscriminate firing by rendering the effects of a smashing bowl uncertain. Why, they urge, should a beautiful head, the result of high-class play, be ruined, perhaps time after time, by wanton driving? But the "live jack" offers no such guarantee, and may, indeed, rather be regarded as placing a premium upon "going it blindly" and driving merely "on spec." The consequence of a riding bowl cannot be estimated beforehand with any approach to accuracy, and *may* do greatest damage to the rider's own side. Besides, the proper way to protect well-placed bowls from being dislodged is either to guard them or, preferentially, to have one or two bowls behind the jack. It is not that the "live jack" stultifies delicate and skilful play that this feature is fundamentally objectionable, but that it not only introduces into a scientific game the element of chance but also gives all the compensation, or a disproportionate share of it, to the lucky bowl that works the havoc. The old English practice of ignoring touchers and ditchers and treating the end as "no end" whenever the jack was driven into the ditch was more sportsmanlike and more logical. To adopt this view would lead to the disappear-

ance of the ditch ; but, after all, it is only by an arbitrary juggling with words, or a kind of legal verbal violence, that the ditch is not a ditch but part and parcel of the green !

Many clubs elect a captain. There is an obvious convenience in the appointment of an officer who shall arrange matches and to whom all questions affecting the game and not the administration of the club may be referred ; but custom is not uniform in this respect and many clubs get on very well without a captain, electing in his stead a certain number of skips for the season and a small match committee. But when a club desires a captain, let the members choose no *roi fainéant*. A strong captain will not shirk responsibility with power, but will not look at the office otherwise. Such a captain will select the skips and, in consultation with them, compose the match teams, and arrange the matches for the ensuing season. To the proper captain the members' confidence will certainly go out without stint, but they have a clear right to expect him to attend the green constantly, in order to study the play of members, to coach them when necessary, to watch " on-coming " talent, to discourage favouritism or cliquism, and always " to play the game."

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE POINTS GAME AND FIXED JACK

Playing with the Head—Infinite Variety in Bowls—THE GAME OF POINTS—Preparation of the Green—Rules of the Competition—DRAWING—Disposition of the Plan—GUARDING—Arranging the Ground—TRAILING—The Prepared Green—DRIVING—To encourage Proficiency in Drawing—FIXED JACK—Plan of the Green—Duties of the Starter—The Marker and the Score—The Carried Jack—Line Bowls—Method of Play.

SINCE the complete Bowler “plays with his head,” the result of brain-work is seen in almost every end in the kaleidoscopic changes that necessitate, on the instant, corresponding changes in defence or attack. The resources of his art are not easily exhausted: there is no such thing as finality in its technics. But whatever the Bowler attempt, it must always be something definite. Haphazard, nondescript play is especially futile. Before the bowl leave his hand the Bowler should have a particular purpose in view and, if he accomplish it, this will be due to applied logic as well as to skilful manipulation of his “wood.” Discomfited he will often be, but failure ought

never to be caused by playing purely at a venture. If he cannot achieve his object directly, he may succeed by means of contingent or secondary methods, such as the follow-through, "chap and lie," double-cannon, the guard, the drive, the drag, the trail, and other shots.

Accordingly, no Bowler may be deemed expert who cannot execute both the intricate and the straightforward shots; and, in order to promote efficiency in the *finesse* of Bowls the game of

### POINTS

has been introduced. By the nature of the case it can only be played with advantage on greens of good quality, and the finer the better. It illustrates four separate shots the necessity for one or other of which is certain to arise in every match. These are Drawing, Guarding, Trailing, and Driving. For the first three kinds some slight preliminary preparation of the far end of the playing space is necessary, and the head should be not less than 33 yards from the mat, and the jack should be placed at least three yards from the top ditch (in Guarding, the upper jack should be so stationed). The stance of jack and bowls in the prearranged head should be marked on the turf with a "dab" of white-

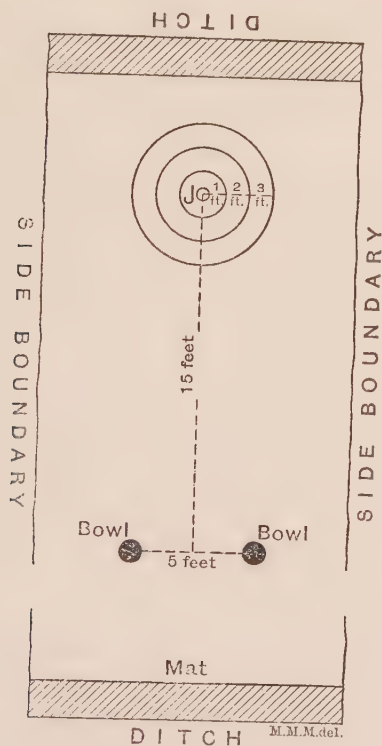


wash, so that they may be readily restored to their original positions in the event of their being dislodged, as will often occur.

Every player uses four bowls, played on the fore and back hand alternately, change of bowl after the start not being sanctioned. In those cases in which all four competitions are being played the same day, one rink being reserved for each section, every candidate makes two rounds of the green, playing four shots at each point; in those cases where a separate evening is given up to each section, he plays his four bowls twice. Ties are settled by playing in each section one bowl on the fore hand and one on the back. Preliminary practice—one shot on the fore and one on the back hand—is permitted in Drawing only. The marker stands at the jack to declare and record the value of each shot that scores, and he may also, if requested, act as umpire.

In DRAWING, three concentric circles of one, two, and three feet radii from the centre tee on which the jack is placed must first be described with whitewash on the green. Then, at a distance of fifteen feet from the jack, and in front of it, two bowls are placed in a horizontal line five feet apart, so that were the line dividing them drawn (which it is not) a perpendicular line from the tee would bisect it. The player's bowl must pass outside of the

stationary bowls without touching them and then come to rest within one of the circles. If it lie within the one-foot circle three points will



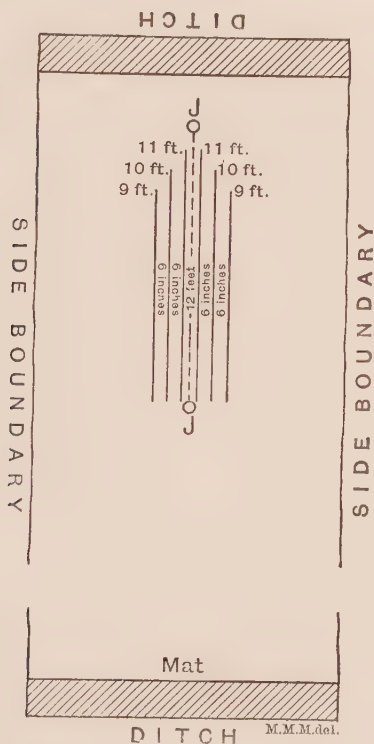
THE HEAD SET FOR DRAWING.

be scored, within the two-foot circle two, and within the three-foot circle one. The highest possible score is twelve. If a bowl rest upon the circumference of a circle, its value will be

ascertained by the marker's applying, as the case may be, a three-, two-, or one-foot rule to the centre of the bowl and jack, and assigning the score of the circle within which the major portion of the bowl is found to lie.

For GUARDING, several lengths of strong white thread are required, two of eleven feet long, two of ten and two of nine, these being arranged as shown in the diagram. The two longest are pinned down on the green, at the far end, in vertical lines about twelve feet from the ditch and six inches apart from each other. On each side of these the ten-foot thread is then fastened to the turf at a distance of six inches from the eleven-foot thread and one foot lower down the green. On each side of the ten-foot threads the nine-foot thread is similarly secured, six inches apart and one foot still lower down the green. Then one jack is laid at the head of the middle space, exactly in the centre, and another jack at the foot of this space and also in the centre, the two being twelve feet apart in a vertical line. Standing at the mat, the player bowls on the fore and back hand alternately with a view to laying the bowl, when dead, on the centre space or either of the side spaces. Should the bowl lie in the middle space three points are given, two points for a bowl in either adjoining space, and one point for a bowl in the outermost.

Thus twelve is the highest possible score, if all four bowls lie in the middle. The bowl must, in every case, be quite clear of the thread. If

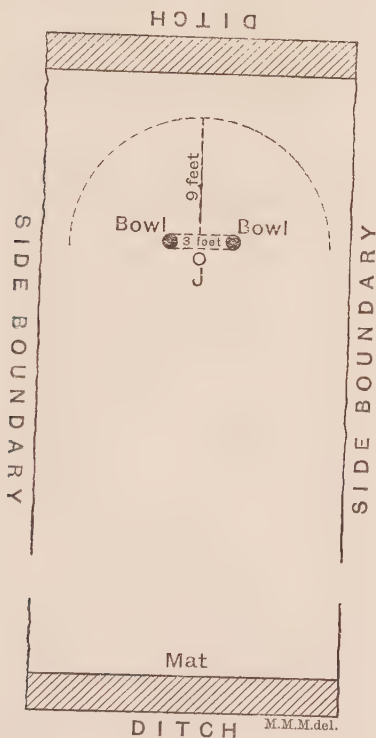


THE HEAD ARRANGED FOR GUARDING.

a bowl touch the top jack—the one being guarded, it will not count at all. If it seem certain that the running bowl will touch the front jack, this should be temporarily lifted.

TRAILING is the section of the Points game which is most worthy of attention. It demands beautiful play and is often extremely effective in a match. In arranging the head it is necessary to place two bowls at the far end of the green at a distance of three feet from each other and exactly horizontal, and then to draw with whitewash, or lay down in strong white thread, a straight line from bowl to bowl across the back and front faces. A jack is then placed just in front of the front line, exactly in the middle and equidistant from each bowl. Behind the bowls a semicircle is drawn in whitewash on the turf with a radius of nine feet from the jack. The head as finally prepared is shown in the diagram. The Bowler is required to trail the jack, his own bowl accompanying or "hugging" it, between the stationary bowls over both of the horizontal lines, into but not outside of the semicircle. If he succeed he will score three points. But if he only trail the jack over the back line without sending his own bowl over, or if the jack be trailed over the front line only, his bowl crossing the back, he will score two points. If his bowl pass between the jack and the stationary bowls over the back line without touching the jack; or if it touch the jack and do not carry it over the front line but itself cross the back line; or if it trail the

jack across the front line without itself passing it, he will score one point. Twelve points is the maximum score for one round. The

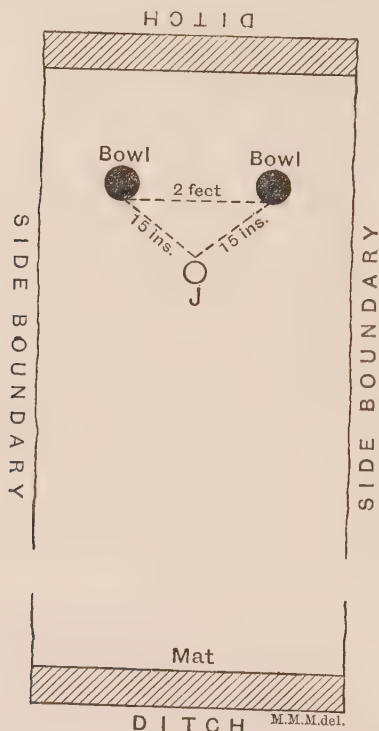


THE HEAD PREPARED FOR TRAILING.

scoring is very partial, for the trailing really done in the exercises for which two points and one point are allowed is either defective or infinitesimal. By comparison the player who



trails perfectly is inadequately recompensed with three points. In all three exercises the player's bowl must not touch the stationary



THE HEAD MADE READY FOR DRIVING.

bowls, nor must the played bowl and trailed jack travel beyond the semicircle.

All that is needed for the exercise of DRIVING is to lay down two bowls, two feet apart in a

horizontal line, and, in front of them a jack, fifteen inches apart from each, occupying thus the position of the apex of an inverted pyramid, as shown in the diagram. If the player drive the jack between the bowls into the ditch and his own bowl run thither also he will score three points ; two points will be allowed if he shift the jack without sending it between the bowls into the ditch, into which his own must run ; and one point will be gained if, his own bowl ultimately running into the ditch, he touch the jack without moving it, or pass between the jack and the stationary bowls, although he has done no driving whatever ! In all three cases the player's bowl must not touch either stationary bowl. The highest possible score is twelve points.

As each competitor in the Points game must go twice round the green—or, in the alternative, play twice at each exercise,—and the maximum score in each section is twelve, the highest possible aggregate is ninety-six points.

With the object of encouraging proficiency in the art of drawing, another exercise, known as the

### FIXED JACK

game, has been devised. It is not uncommon, because it may be practised on greens that are not quite up to the high standard demanded

by the whole of the Points game. As it monopolises all the green a competition is usually held only once a month or so.

During the forenoon the groundman will lay out the green according to a plan prepared for him. A green set for twelve jacks is shown in the diagram on pp. 218, 219. The number must depend upon the size of the green, but the larger the number that can be accommodated the better, provided that the rinks are not too closely packed.

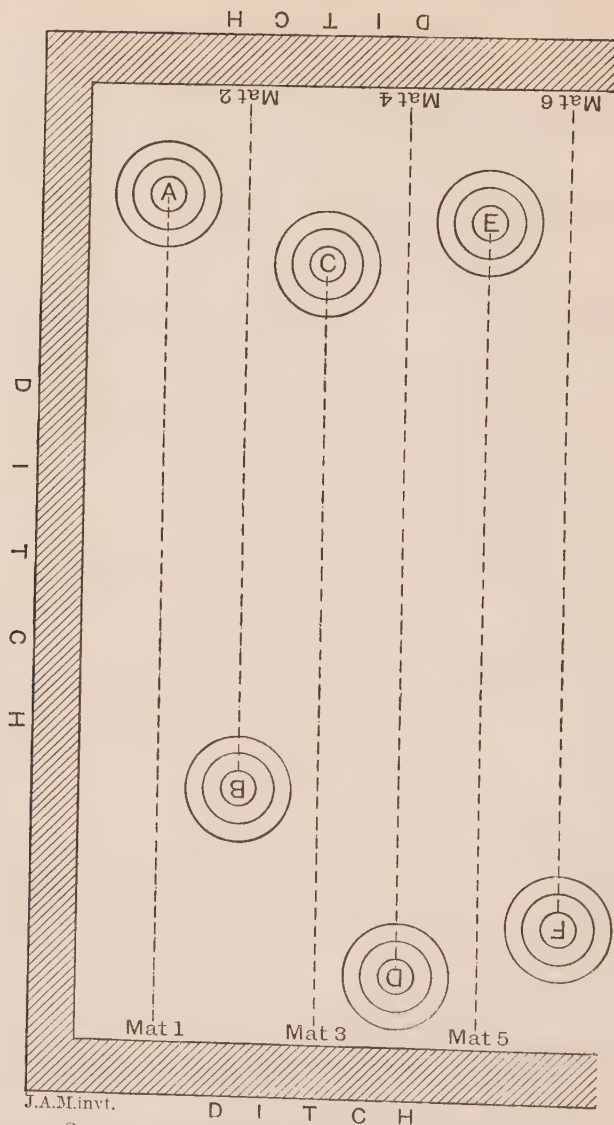
Before play all the mats are laid on the banks and the jacks in the ditch, opposite to their respective stances. The tee for each jack is plainly marked with whitewash and around this, as centre, three concentric circles are described having radii of one foot, two feet, and three feet. The order of play should be balloted for three days before and exhibited on the notice-board. Time defaulters are sent down to the last places, though in important contests disqualification is the penalty. In the event of a heavy entry the competition may be extended over one or more days. The starter officiates as master of the ceremonies.

Every competitor must provide his own marker. Usually the late starters act in this capacity, the earlier ones being in honour bound to reciprocate. The markers are supplied with identical scoring cards, which

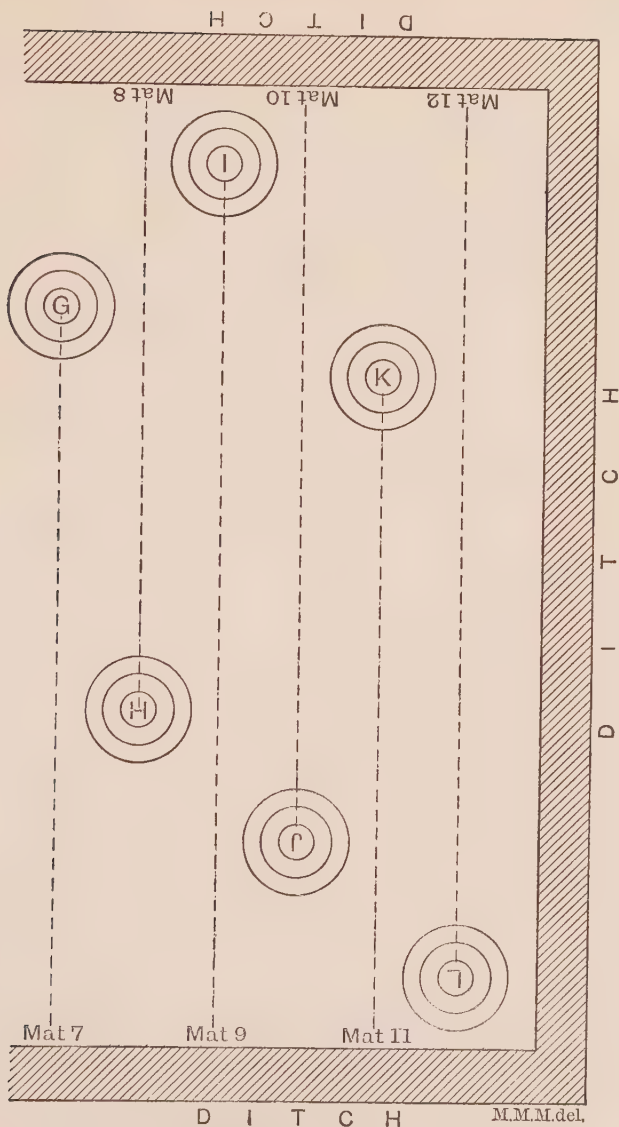
they sign before returning to the secretary. Every bowl lying within the one-foot circle counts three, within the two-foot circle two, and within the three-foot circle one. If a player's first bowl knock the jack off its perch into any of the circles and the bowl also rest in a circle, the score of the latter circle will be allowed ; but if the jack be driven outside of the circles no score will be reckoned, even though the bowl lie within a circle. The jack must be replaced before the second bowl is delivered, and, if the like be repeated, similar procedure will be followed. It is better, however, to authorise the marker to lift the jack altogether when he sees the bowl will hit it, and then replace it after the bowl has passed. A bowl lying on a circumference line takes the score of the circle within which the greater portion of it lies. Thus, if the major part project outside of the periphery of circle three, the marker will allow no score ; but should any line divide the bowl equally, half of the combined circle values will be scored.

Usually when a bowl has been scored (if it be a counter) it is removed, but it may be agreed beforehand that the bowl must lie until the second has been played. Whichever method be adopted, it must be applied throughout, but the former is preferable. As every player uses two bowls and the highest possible

## THE FIXED JACK



GREEN SET FOR TWELVE JACKS IN THE FIXED JACK GAME:



A, B, ETC., INDICATE THE POSITION OF THE JACKS.



score at a jack is six, the highest aggregate for a round of twelve jacks is seventy-two.

One round suffices for a green set for eight jacks and upwards, two rounds for a green set for six jacks, which must be taken as the minimum, if the competition is not to be robbed of all value. For it is of the essence of the Fixed Jack game that the jacks shall be of varying length, two jacks of like length in succession being forbidden. Each mat is placed in position and afterwards removed to the bank by the player, while each jack is placed *in situ* and then removed to the ditch by the marker. Competitors must take their turn at the starter's summons. It would be an advantage to require one bowl to be played on the fore hand and the other on the back; but without a hard and fast rule to this effect, competitors are free to follow their own sweet will. No preliminary practice must be allowed. This is very essential.

Sharply on time, the starter despatches No. 1, simultaneously warning No. 2 to get ready. No. 1. then proceeds to Mat 1 and lays the mat, his marker meanwhile having taken his stand at circle A and placed the jack on the tee. No. 1 having played both bowls and the marker having entered the score (if any), the former restores the mat to the bank and the latter the jack to the ditch. The competitor next

goes to Mat 2 and the marker to circle B, where a similar routine is pursued. But as soon as the candidate goes to Mat 3 the starter sends off No. 2 at Mat 1 with *his* marker at circle A, and so on with the remaining players, a constant succession of competitors being maintained until the close, at intervals of two jacks from each other. When the rivalry is in full blast, the green presents an exceedingly animated appearance.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THE LAWS OF BOWLS

The Seventeen Laws of the Game—I. Rinks, or Divisions of the Green—II. Bowls: Size and Bias—III. Size of the Jack—IV. Conditions of a Game—V. Rink, or Team of Players—VI. Skips, or Drivers—VII. The Cloth, or Mat—VIII. Throwing the Jack—IX. Movement of the Jack and of Bowls—X. Jack, or Bowl Rebounding—XI. Jack, or Bowl Burned—XII. Touchers—XIII. Ditchers—XIV. Possession of the Rink—XV. Result of Head—XVI. Objects on the Green—XVII. Onlookers.

WE are now able to study profitably the Laws of the level-green game of Bowls, which were drafted by a sub-committee of the Scottish Bowling Association and are issued—with such revision as may be adopted from time to time—under its sanction. They govern the rink, single-handed, and pairs games alike and are, in the main, recognised throughout the world by all clubs in possession of greens of adequate size and quality. The laws are seventeen in number, many of them being divided into clauses. In several instances, too, the Scottish Bowling Association has annotated

them. These annotations are, in the following pages, placed within square brackets. I have added, in certain cases, comments of my own, and these are distinguished by the letters N.B. prefixed. The salient part of each law has been printed in black type, whenever it has seemed helpful to do so.

## LAWS OF THE GAME

*(As approved by the Scottish Bowling Association)*

### LAW I.—RINKS, OR DIVISIONS OF THE GREEN

1. The green shall be divided into spaces, called **rinks**, **not less than 19 nor more than 21 feet in width**, numbered consecutively, the centre of each rink being marked on the bank at each end by a pin or other device, and the four corners of the rink by pins driven into the ditch. The side boundary of the rink shall stretch from bank to bank.

[To prevent disputes, it is recommended that the pins at the opposite ends of the rink should be connected by a linen thread drawn tightly on the surface of the green; and that, where practicable, the boundary pins of an outside rink be placed at least two feet from the side ditch. It is also recommended that the bank be not less than 18 inches in height, with an angle from the green of not more than 120 degrees.]

N.B.—By “pin” is meant an iron peg pointed to pierce the bank. It bears the number of the rink or playing space (1, 2, 3, 4, etc.) on an enamelled iron plate. The pegs which carry at the back a small metal cup (with a lid) for holding chalk are the best. The rinks should be divided by strong *thin* twine rather than thread,

drawn taut and laid dead flush with the turf, so that it shall not mar in the slightest degree the running of the bowl.

2. When a match is to be played, the numbers of the rinks should be put into a bag or other receptacle, and drawn at the green by the skips, or their representatives.

3. Ordinary games may be played, without having recourse to drawing, on a rink mutually agreed upon.

*N.B.*—In such games "First come first served" usually determines the choice of rink. The laws should give members the right of choice of rink for championships, handicaps, and other special contests. In many, perhaps in most greens, all the rinks are not of equally good quality, and, in important contests particularly, it is desirable to allow a right of choice to the competitors. Players in occupation of a preferred space could not feel aggrieved at a request which carried the sanction of law behind it.

#### LAW II.—BOWLS: SIZE AND BIAS

1. No bowl shall exceed  $16\frac{1}{2}$  inches in circumference, nor  $3\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. in weight, nor have a less bias than the standard bowl adopted by the Association.

*N.B.*—This law needs amendment in three particulars—(1), the minimum size, (2), the minimum weight, and (3), the minimum bias should be expressly stated. What *is* the bias of a standard bowl? What *is* the bias of a No. 3? Bowlers wishing to use bowls of larger bias than the minimum are entitled to do so under this law.

2. Any bowl to which objection is taken shall be tested by comparison with a standard bowl of the Association, bearing the Association's stamp. Any objection must be taken at the start, or not later than the sixth end of a game.

In the case of a club match or competition, **the test shall at once be applied**, at the distance of 32 yards, by two referees appointed by the parties; and if the referees disagree, they shall appoint an oversman. In the event of a bowl being declared of a less bias than the standard, the further use of it in that club match or competition shall not be allowed, and the party at fault shall, from the stage at which the game then stood, play with any bowl, conform to standard, selected for him by the referees or oversman, or forfeit the game. In the event of the game being so forfeited, the objecting rink or player shall, in addition to being declared winner, be entitled to add to its or his score one shot for such number of shots or ends as may still remain to be played.

In the case of a tournament, the bowl or bowls objected to by an opponent shall, at the conclusion of the game, be taken possession of by the Secretary of the tournament, who shall have the same forthwith tested by two of the *umpires of the tournament*, who are not members of the same club as either of the parties, and who, if they cannot agree, shall call in another of the umpires who must also be a neutral person, to determine whether the objection is *frivolous*; but if there be reasonable ground for doubt, the bowl or bowls shall at once be sent to one of the Officers of the Association, to be tested by him. The officer shall test and return without delay all bowls thus sent to him, and shall also send to the Secretary of the tournament a written report of the result of the test. The decision of the umpires, oversman, or officer, as the case may be, shall be final. The objector shall lodge with the Secretary of the tournament the sum of two shillings and sixpence, to cover the expense of testing, and to discourage frivolous objections, which sum shall be returned to him if his objection be sustained, and in that case the Secretary of the tournament shall recover said fee from the owner of the bowl or bowls before they are returned to him, and the competitor who used them shall



be disqualified, and his opponent held as having won the tie.

[*Note*.—To facilitate the testing of bowls under the rule, the Association trusts that each constituent Club of the Association will provide itself with a standard bowl, made and stamped by one of its officers. Competitors in a public tournament are recommended to have their bowls tested and stamped beforehand.]

*N.B.*—Note the second sentence of the first section of the second clause. The reason why objection should be taken immediately cause for suspecting a bowl or bowls arises is obvious. If left to the end of a match, the umpire is bound to decline to entertain it, since it might be a mere pretext for a re-play. As evidence of good faith, therefore, an objection to an alleged unfair bowl, must be raised without the smallest delay. With reference to the S.B.A.'s Note, if clause 1, which sets forth the dimensions and weight of a bowl, were amended as proposed, and every bowl stamped with the number of its bias and the name of its maker, this precaution would go far to meet all requirements. It sometimes happens that bowls have their bias altered after they have left the manufacturer. In such case the new turner must obliterate the original stamp, and stamp the fresh bias on the bowls. The owner of the bowls must see that this is done, and the responsibility for the alterations in the bowls should be fastened upon him. Should it appear that, when re-turned, the bias has been reduced to less than No. 3 (defined as I have suggested), the turner should inform his customer and enter the new bias in his ledger with the date and name.

3. Markers.—In single-handed tournaments one marker only shall act in each game. The marker may answer queries as to position of bowls and their distance from the jack, but shall not give directions to, nor consult with, either player as to the play. Markers

shall be appointed by the Directors of the tournaments, Local Secretaries, or Umpires, whom failing, by the Competitors themselves.

*N.B.*—The first two sentences of this clause should also be held to govern club handicaps and other contests for prizes, whether singles or pairs. It will be useful if the marker officiate as umpire as well as scorer. The scoring in a rink game is otherwise provided for.

### LAW III.—SIZE OF THE JACK

The jack shall be about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter.

### LAW IV.—CONDITIONS OF A GAME

1. A game may consist of any number of shots or heads, or may be played for any length of time, as previously agreed upon.

*N.B.*—A game or match by time is open to such palpable abuse (which yet might be difficult of proof) that it should be forbidden by law.

2. When a match consists of more than one rink on each side, the total scores of the respective parties shall decide the contest.

3. When a game consists of a stated number of heads, and there is only one rink on each side, should it be found when the given number of heads has been played that **the scores are equal, one extra head shall be played so as to decide the contest, and should the extra head result again in a tie, one more shall be played.**

*N.B.*—If the second extra head result in a tie the scores will still remain equal. Yet the spirit of the law indicates a desire that a definite issue (*i.e.*, a win, not a draw) shall be reached; in which case the law should provide for as many extra heads as may be necessary to give one side or the other at least a bare majority of

points; or, in the alternative, the whole game should be played over again on another date. The law considers only the case of a single rink. But the same principle should be extended to all games, whether of one, two, or more rinks a-side. Thus in a club match of four rinks a-side, should the contest result in a tie after the last ends, one extra head should be ordered in every rink with a view to reaching a definite decision.

#### LAW V.—RINK, OR TEAM OF PLAYERS

1. A rink or team shall consist of four players, each playing two bowls, and called respectively, according to the order in which they play, leader or lead, second player, third player, and skip or driver. Unless otherwise mutually agreed upon, it shall be determined by tossing or by playing a trial head, which party is to play first, the winner of the toss or head to have the choice. In all subsequent heads the party which won the previous head shall play first. The leaders play their two bowls alternately, and so on, each pair of players in succession, to the end. The order of playing shall not be changed after the first head has been played. No one shall play until his opponent's bowl has ceased to run; a bowl so played may be stopped and sent back to be played over again.

*N.B.*—The question of playing first should be settled by toss only. To play a trial end for it is a waste of time. It would be more sportsmanlike to allow the order of playing to be changed *by mutual consent*. A match once begun must continue (weather permitting), but if a skip find his leader, for example, "out of sorts," why should he be debarred from altering his place, provided the opposing skip consent to the change? But no change should be allowed, save at the completion of an end. Nor should the rule, as amended, apply

to the skip, since every skip should know whether he is fit to play or not on the day of a match and, if he is not well enough to start, should find a substitute before the beginning of the match or game, or change places with the player originally chosen for the third place.

2. **A bowl played by mistake** shall be replaced by the player's own bowl.

3. When **a player has played before his turn**, the opponents may stop the bowl in its course, or allow it to remain where it comes to rest, or cause it to be played over again in its proper order. If it has moved either jack or bowls, the opponents shall have the power to cause the end to be begun anew.

4. No player shall change his bowls during the game, except with the consent of the opposing party.

*N.B.*—Leave to change bowls should be allowed, without the opponent's consent.

5. **If less than three players appear on either side, the game, so far as that rink is concerned, shall not proceed**, and the rink with which this occurs shall be held as having *failed to appear*, and shall forfeit the game. Should such forfeiture take place where more rinks than one from each club are concerned, and where the aggregate or average scores are to decide the contest, **the scores of the remaining rinks only shall be counted**, but such average shall, as a penalty in the case of the defaulting club, be arrived at **by dividing the aggregate score by the number of rinks which should have played**, and not, as in the case of the other club, by the number actually engaged in the game. **In the absence of a single player, from one or both sides, in an ordinary club match or friendly game**, the number of bowls shall be made up by the party or parties playing odd bowls, **these odd bowls being played by the first and second players**. In a match for a trophy

or other prize, where more rinks than one from each club are engaged, odd bowls may, in the absence of one of the players of any rink, be played in the manner above provided, but one-fourth of the total shots gained by such rink shall be deducted from its score at the end of the game. **In a match for a trophy or other prize where a club is represented by only one rink such rink must play with four men, but should only three men appear** on one of the sides, the whole details of the case shall, unless an amicable arrangement be made for another date within the authorised limit of time, be reported by the umpire to the Local Secretary, who shall, in turn, report them to the Secretary of the Association. The Secretary of the Association shall then call a meeting of Committee to dispose of each such case on its merits.

*N.B.*—The failure of a club or rink to appear cannot be too severely punished. Such dereliction of duty should be posted by the Association to which the defaulting club belongs. Since no club is required to enter for a competition save of its own free will, its undertaking should be fulfilled at all costs. A rink or rinks, as originally composed, may not (for good reasons) be available on the day appointed, but such a contingency can always be provided against by the nomination of a few reserves.

#### LAW VI.—SKIPS, OR DRIVERS

1. The skips shall have sole charge of their respective rinks, and their instructions must be obeyed by the other players.

2. The skip shall have the control of the play, but he may delegate this duty at any time to a substitute, who is usually the third player.

*N.B.*—This clause should explicitly state that the skip shall delegate his functions to the third player only.



Such an instruction would prevent the squabbling that sometimes takes place among the other members of a rink in the skip's absence.

3. As soon as a bowl is greened, the director must retire behind the jack.

4. The players not engaged must stand *jack-high*, or *behind the mat-line*.

5. The last player shall remove the mat to the bank.

6. The two skips shall be judges of all disputed points, and, when they agree, their decision shall be final; if they cannot agree, the point shall be decided by the umpire previously appointed, whom failing, by a neutral person mutually chosen.

#### LAW VII.—THE CLOTH, OR MAT

*N.B.*—This law should be called "The Mat." Nothing in the nature of a "cloth" should be used as a footer, if the green is to be saved from damage.

1. Each player, when playing, shall stand with at least one foot on the mat.

2. The mat shall, at the first head, be placed by the leader of the party which is to play first, and in every subsequent head by the leader of the party which lost the previous head, but it shall be in the option of the winner of any head to have **the mat laid at the place where the jack lay, or between it and any point backwards not less than one yard from the ditch**, the mat in any case being placed in the centre of the rink. In starting play, or when the jack at the finish of a head lies in the ditch, or less than one yard from it, the mat shall be placed forward to about that distance. The mat shall not be moved till the head is finished, but if moved by accident or inadvertently, it shall be replaced as near its original position as possible. It is recommended that the size of the mat be 22 by 14 inches or thereby.



*N.B.*—It is a pity the S.B.A. does not sanction, in the interests of the green, the use of a mat large enough to accommodate the player's stride.

#### LAW VIII.—THROWING THE JACK

1. The leader of the party which is to play first shall throw the jack.

2. If the jack run into the ditch at the first throw in a game, it shall be placed two yards from it. If it be thrown into the ditch at any subsequent head, the opposing party shall throw it anew, but shall not play first. When thrown less than two yards from the ditch, the jack should be moved out to that distance.

3. The jack shall be thrown not less than 25 yards from the mat, and if it run to one side it shall be moved straight across and placed in the line of the pins numbering the rinks. If it be thrown less than 25 yards, it shall be treated according to the rule applicable to a jack thrown into the ditch after the first head. (See clause 2 of this law.)

*N.B.*—The last sentence might be more simply expressed thus: "If it be thrown less than 25 yards, it shall be thrown anew by the opposite leader."

4. If none of the foregoing provisions have been transgressed, the jack shall be played to wherever it has been thrown; or, if moved, it must be by mutual consent of parties.

*N.B.*—Since under clause 2 the jack must be placed at least two yards from the ditch and under clause 3 must be centred, it is not clear what other movement, even by mutual consent, is contemplated in the closing words.

5. After having been played to, the jack shall not be touched or interfered with in any manner otherwise than by the effects of the play, until the result of the head has been determined.

## LAW IX.—MOVEMENT OF THE JACK AND OF BOWLS

1. If the jack be driven into the ditch, within the limits of the rink, its place shall be accurately marked, but it shall not be removed from its place (either on to the green or elsewhere), except by a toucher (see Law XII., clause 5). Should it be driven beyond the limits of the rink, that is to say, over the bank, or past the side boundary of the rink by a bowl in play, it shall be counted dead; but if moved by a bowl *out of play*, it shall be restored to its place.

[*Note*.—A bowl played or driven to the ditch which is not a toucher, shall, when it falls into the ditch, be out of play.]

*N.B.*—Since the place of the jack in the ditch must be accurately marked (by drawing a circle in chalk around it), it should be lawful for the skip (or third man) to place it temporarily on the edge of the green, so that the bowler shall be able to obtain a clear sight of it, restoring it to the ditch as soon as the bowl has been greened. This, though sometimes done, is, under the letter of the law, not permissible, and I have known cases in which a claim for a “burned” jack—moved thus inadvertently—has been made. Such a claim is rather “sharp,” but if persisted in must be upheld. It is legitimate for the skip to indicate the position of the jack in the ditch.

2. The foregoing rule as to being counted dead when driven beyond the limits of the rink shall likewise apply to bowls, whether they be *touchers* or not, but neither jack nor bowl shall be counted dead unless it be wholly outside the boundary when it comes to rest, even though it may have been so in its course.

3. A bowl when "dead" must be at once removed to the bank. Whenever the jack is "dead," the head must of necessity be played over again, and it shall in no case be counted a played head, not even though all the bowls have been played.

4. The jack (though driven to the side of the rink, if not beyond its limits), may be played to on either hand, but any bowl played to it, which, when it has come to rest, lies wholly outside the rink, shall be counted dead.

5. In the event of the jack being broken, the head shall be begun anew.

#### LAW X.—JACK, OR BOWL REBOUNding

Should the jack run against the bank or a bowl in the ditch, and rebound on to the green, or after being played into the ditch be so operated upon by a toucher as to find its way again on to the green, it shall be played to in the same manner as if it had never been moved. But a bowl similarly rebounding shall, *unless it be a toucher*, be counted dead, and any bowl or jack moved thereby shall be put back to its former position.

#### LAW XI.—JACK, OR BOWL BURNED

The term "burned" is applied to a jack or bowl which has been interfered with or displaced, otherwise than by a bowl in play.

##### JACK BURNED

1. *While in motion on the green.*

When a jack while in motion on the green is burned—

- (a) By one of the players, the opposing party shall have the option of letting it lie where it stops

and playing the head out, or of beginning the head anew.

- (b) By a neutral person, or by a bowl belonging to a neutral person, the parties shall come to an agreement as to its position; otherwise the head shall be begun anew.

2. *While in motion in the ditch.*

Bowls in the ditch which are not touchers should be immediately removed to the bank (see Law XIII.), but in the event of an omission to remove them the jack or touchers coming in contact with them shall be allowed to lie where they rest. In such a case, these bowls should then be removed to the bank.

3. *While at rest.*

When a jack while at rest on the green is burned—

- (a) By one of the players, the opposite party may replace it in its original position, or allow it to remain as moved.
- (b) By a neutral person, or by a bowl belonging to a neutral person, the parties shall come to an agreement as to its position; otherwise the head shall be begun anew.

4. *While at rest in the ditch.* (See Law IX., clause 1.)

### BOWL BURNED

1. *While in motion.*

When a bowl, during its original course, and before it has passed the jack, is burned—

- (a) By the party to whom it belongs, it shall be counted dead.
- (b) By an opponent, the player's party may claim to have it played over again, or to let it lie where it rests, or to have the head begun anew.
- (c) By a neutral person, it shall be played over again.

When a bowl which, in its original course, has passed the jack and, being still in motion, is burned—

- (a) By the player's own party, it shall be counted dead, whether it has touched the jack or not.

*N.B.*—The law is silent as to what shall be done with the jack which the "burned" bowl may have touched. Section (a) of clauses 1 and 3, strictly speaking, refers only to the burning of the jack by one of the players and not by his bowl. This point must be made here, because section (b) of these clauses deals with both the neutral person and his bowl. It is proper to punish the side to which the "burned" bowl belonged, but in touching the jack it may have materially affected the position of the other side. In such circumstances, the head ought to be started afresh.

- (b) By an opponent or a neutral person, the player's party may choose to let it lie where it comes to rest, or to have the head begun anew.

When a bowl which had come to rest is afterwards set in motion by a bowl in play, and, while still moving, is burned—

- (a) By the party to whom it belongs, it shall be counted dead.
- (b) By an opponent, the party to whom it belongs may choose to let it lie where it comes to rest, or place it where they think it would probably have rested had it not been interfered with.
- (c) By a neutral person, it may be allowed to lie, or placed to the mutual satisfaction of parties; where agreement cannot be attained, the head shall be played over again.

2. *While at rest.*

When a bowl while at rest is burned—

- (a) By either party, it may be replaced by the opposite party, or in the latter's option, be allowed to remain where it lies.

- (b) By a neutral person, or by a bowl not in play, it should be replaced as near its original position as possible.

## LAW XII.—TOUCHERS

1. A bowl which touches the jack during its original course on the green, **although previously it may have also touched one or more bowls**, is called a *toucher*, and counts in the game wherever it rests, if on the rink, but should a bowl, after it has ceased running, fall over and touch the jack, *after another bowl has been delivered*, it is not to be accounted a toucher. **No bowl can in any circumstances become a toucher when the jack is in the ditch.**

*N.B.*—Bowlers new to the rink game frequently stumble at the expression “counts in.” I have been repeatedly asked whether a toucher counts one point because it is a toucher. I have, of course, explained that the phrase only means that a toucher remains alive wherever it may happen to lie within the limits of the space until the end is played, and *does not count anything at all merely because it has touched the jack*. If it contribute to the score, this will be because it lies—or is one of several bowls on the same side which lie—nearer to the jack than the nearest bowl of the opposite side.

2. **If a toucher run into the ditch** when played, or be driven into the ditch during the course of the subsequent play, **the place where it rests shall be marked**, but its position shall not be altered except by the action of another toucher or the jack.

3. **A toucher must be distinguished by a chalk or other distinct mark.** Unless it be marked before the second succeeding bowl is delivered, it is not to be accounted a toucher. **If the mark be not removed** from the bowl before it is played in the succeeding head, it may be regarded as a *burned* bowl, and be removed to the bank.



*N.B.*—The object of prescribing a limit for the chalking is to prevent an improper claim for a toucher. That is the reason also why the mark must be wiped off before the bowl is played again. In the last sentence of clause 3 “shall” should be substituted for “may.” “May” is always bad.

4. If a bowl be moved *outwards* from the jack while being marked, it must remain as it is; but if it be moved *towards* the jack it must be restored to its original position.

5. Touchers may act on the jack or touchers in the ditch.

*N.B.*—This clause is too succinct and should be more clearly expressed. In any case it ought to be read with Law IX., clause 1, and Law X. But its meaning, as stated, is certainly obscure.

### LAW XIII.—DITCHERS

1. A bowl which does not touch the jack in its original course on the green, and runs against the bank or into the ditch, or is driven into the ditch by the effects of the play, is called a *ditcher*, and must be immediately removed to the bank.

*N.B.*—The skip, or third man, should see that this is promptly done. It is, in fact, imperative. Too many ditchers are allowed to remain in the ditch, through sheer carelessness.

2. Should a ditcher in any circumstances return to the green it must be placed on the bank.

### LAW XIV.—POSSESSION OF THE RINK

1. As soon as each bowl stops running, the possession of the rink is transferred to the other party, time being allowed for marking a toucher.

2. The party in possession of the rink for the time being must not be disturbed or annoyed by their opponents.

*N.B.*—This clause is not particular enough to meet the case of those players who have a habit of making would-be funny remarks, or indulging in various antics which, whether so designed or not, may affect the play of some bowlers.

#### LAW XV.—RESULT OF HEAD

1. When the last bowl in a head stops running, half a minute shall elapse, if either party so require, before the shots are counted.

2. Neither jack nor bowls shall be moved until both parties are agreed as to the shots.

3. If a bowl requiring to be measured is resting on another bowl, which prevents its measurement, the best means available shall be taken to secure it in its position, whereupon the other shall be removed. The same course shall be followed when more than two bowls are involved.

4. No measuring shall be allowed until the head has been played out.

5. When, at the conclusion of a head, a tie for the first shot occurs, it shall, in a game of ends, be counted a played head.

6. The duty of keeping the score, and of announcing the state of the game at the end of each head, should be assigned to the second player.

*N.B.*—This law should read more definitely thus:—

“The second player shall keep the score and announce to his skip the state of the game at the close of each head.”

#### LAW XVI.—OBJECTS ON THE GREEN

In no circumstances is any object to be laid on the green, or on a bowl, or on the jack; but it may be displayed in the hand for the guidance of the player.

## LAW XVII.—ONLOOKERS

Persons not engaged in the game must confine themselves to the banks, and preserve an attitude of strict neutrality.

*N.B.*—Audible comment on or criticism of the play and players is in exceedingly bad taste. In the interests of the pastime and its popularity, spectators should be encouraged to attend matches, especially when they are likely to see a fine exposition of the game. But they must refrain from all conduct calculated to annoy Bowlers and perhaps put them off their play.



THE END

## INDEX

- Absentee players, law as to, 229.
- Adamson, Adam, as skip, 99.
- Addison, Joseph, and the Bowling green, 32.
- Alleys, Bowling, two kinds of, 11; first London, 12; licensed, 25.
- Alloa, match in winter at, 129.
- Anderson, George, of Toronto, 78, 81.
- Andrews, Robert, skip of Belfast B.C., 60.
- Archers' Hall, Edinburgh, 42.
- Ascham, Roger, quoted, 13.
- Associations: Scottish, 50-2; London and Southern Counties, 53; Midland Counties, 54; Imperial, 55-6; English, 56-9; Irish, 61; Welsh, 61; New South Wales, 65; Victoria, 65; Ontario, 75; Western Ontario, 75.
- Attitude in play, 180-1.
- Aubrey, John, and Suckling's gambling, 21.
- Aurora Leigh*, quoted, 36.
- Australia Cup presented, 55.
- Australian Bowlers, first visit to the United Kingdom, 42, 55; customs of, 65, 67; first match, 66; results of tour, 68.
- Australian greens, 71; club-houses, 72.
- Ayres, Messrs. F. H., Bowling green Bowl-makers, 156.
- Ayrshire *versus* Glasgow, 47.
- Backhand play, nature of, 175; importance of, 178-9.
- Bacon, Francis, quoted, 14, 82.
- Baines, Thomas, Secretary of the English B.A., 57.
- Barclay and Perkins's ancient Bowls, 154.
- Barnett, David W., the Irish skip, 61; his play at Cardiff, 94; at Belfast, 97, 98.
- Bawden, S., Canadian skip, 84.
- Beginners, advice to, 164-86.
- Belfast, internationals at, 97.
- Belfast B.C., 59.
- Berjeau, Charles, on *Boulingrin* and *Boulevard*, 106.
- "Be up!" 185.
- Bias: definition of, 153; how obtained, 153; abuses of, 159; English B.A.'s investigation, 160; of a standard No. 3, 161; forehand and backhand play, 175-9; against the, 177; law as to, 224; altered, 226.
- Bicket's green, Kilmarnock, 44.
- Blake, Dr. C. Paget, collection of Bowls in Museum, Torquay, 14.
- Blythe, W., fine skipping of, 101.
- Border, Bowlers of the English, 54.
- Boulevard*, derivation of, 106.
- Boulingrin*, derivation of, 106.
- Bounds Green B.C., records at, 122, 123-4.
- Bowl, the: described, 152; "biased," 153; manufacture of, 156-1; dressed with ronuk,

- 159; under-sized, 161; weight and size prescribed, 163; buying the, 163; how to hold, 184; measuring, 200; law as to size and bias, 224; and as to testing, 225; played by mistake, law as to, 229; and as to change of, during game, 229; law as to a "dead," 233; and rebounding, 234; and burned, 235-6; and as to measurement, 239.
- "Bowler's grip," 184.
- Bowling Club, how to start a, 131-3.
- Bowls *à la française*, 109.
- Bowls, antiquity of, 4; earliest drawings of, 5, 6; the people's pastime, 7; prohibited, 8; partially tolerated, 10; degradation of, 12; Drake's immortal match, 14; Shakspeare a player, 17; gambling at, 21; noted London greens in the 18th century, 27-9; becomes the national game of Scotland, 38; Scottish B.A. founded, 50; revival of the game in London, 53; in Australia, 55; the old-fashioned game, 58; in Ireland, 59; in Wales, 61; in Australia, 65-75; in Canada, 74-87; in France, 105, 109-12; in Italy, 108; in Germany, 112; in Holland, 113; in the United States, 113; in the East, 114; in South Africa, 114; in mid-winter, 129; advice to a beginner, 164-86; law as to conditions of a match or game at, 227.
- Braid green, Edinburgh, internationals at, 93.
- British team in Canada in 1906, 80; in 1910, 84; effect of the tours, 85.
- Brooke, Lord, Robert Greville, 20.
- Brough, G. G., as skip, 54.
- Brown, James, of Sanquhar, services to the game, 50-1; in Canada, 77.
- Browning, Elizabeth Barrett, quoted, 36.
- Brownswood B.C. green, the first Australian match on, 66-7.
- "Burned" bowl, 67; law as to, 235-6.
- "Burned" jack, law as to, 234-5.
- Burns, Robert, scarcely mentions Bowls, 45.
- Calcutta, Bowls in, 114.
- Calvin, John, playing on Sunday, 20.
- Canada, Bowls introduced into, 74; peculiarities of play in, 75; greens in, 76.
- Canadians' tour in Great Britain in 1904, 78; in 1908, 81; results of, 83.
- Cape Town, Bowls in, 114.
- Captain, the, office of, 205.
- Cardiff, internationals at, 94.
- Carlisle, Canadians at, 82.
- Carruthers, James Gillespie, both lead and skip, 196; brilliant game of, at Belfast, 97; his conspicuous success at South London green in 1911, 99; as player, 180.
- Chambers, Robert, quoted, 41.
- Chapman, J. R., as lead, 93, 180.
- Charles I., an enthusiastic Bowler, 21; his gambling with Shute, 21; visits to Collins End, 22; at the green at the Spring Garden, 25.
- Childs, Harry, in match at Reading, 121.
- Chiswick and West London Club, record at, 123.
- Clarendon, Lord, quoted, 27.
- Clubhouses, costly, undesirable, 72.
- Coach, groundman as, 148; friend should act as, to beginner, 164.
- Cole, W. A., Welsh skip, 62, 97.

- Compleat Gamester, The*, quoted, 30.  
 Cooper, G. W., of Kenilworth B.C., Dublin, 96.  
 County Associations in England, 59.  
 Crown-green game, the, 145-6.  
 Cuddon, W. J., manager of the Australian team of 1901, 66.  
 Cummings, C. L., as player, 54.  
*Curiosities of Literature*, quoted, 25.  
 Dalton, John, at Bowls, 35.  
 Darwin, Charles, on the *Action of Worms*, 140.  
 Davies, David, Welsh skip, 62.  
 Davison, Dr. J. R., Irish skip, 61; play at Cardiff, 96; at the South London green, 101.  
 Defaulters, law as to, 229.  
 Delivery, art of, 179, 182-5.  
 "Devil's Bowling green," 24.  
 Dick, J. W., as skip, 54.  
 Dickens, Charles, quoted, 108.  
 Dickson, A., of Belmont B.C., Belfast, 96.  
 Dinas Powis, internationals at, 93.  
 Ditch, the, 134, 204.  
 Ditchboard inquiry, the, 134.  
 Ditchers, 201; law as to, 238.  
 Drake, Sir Francis, 3; his match on Plymouth Hoe, 14, 15.  
 Drawing in Points game, 208.  
 Drive, secret of, 68; the bowl in, 184; by the skip, 197; the wanton, 204.  
 Driving [in Points], 214.  
 Dublin, Kenilworth B.C., 61.  
 Dumping, evils of, 183-4.  
*Dunciad, The*, quoted, 153.  
 Earle, John, description of a Bowle-Alley [1628], 22.  
 Edgar, Dr. J. W., Canadian skip, 84.  
 Edinburgh and Bowls, 40; inter-nationals at, 93; public greens, 116-7;  
 Edinburgh B.C., the, 42.  
 Eglinton Cup, complete list of winners of, 48-9.  
 Eglinton, Earl of, 46.  
 Elgin and Bowls, 42.  
*Emblems, Divine and Moral*, quoted, 24.  
 Emmerson, J. S., as skip, 54; as player, 180.  
*Encyclopædia Britannica*, quoted, 4.  
 English B.A., first, 56; reconstructed anew, 56; its labours, 57-9.  
 Evelyn, John, plays match at Durdans, 25; travels in France, Italy, and Switzerland, 106-8.  
 Excelite bowl, the, 152.  
 Expletives, use of, 165.  
 Fenwick, Robert, as lead, 93.  
 Fingland, John, of Banbury B.C., 96.  
 Fingland, Samuel, captain of the British team in Canada in 1906, 80.  
 Firing, on, 198; indiscriminate, 204.  
 Fitzstephen, William, describes Bowls in the 12th century, 4.  
 Fixed Jack, game of, 215; preparing the green, 216; the game described, 216; jacks of varying length, 220.  
 Fleming, Dr. D. H., quoted, 20.  
 Footer, *see* Mat.  
 Forehand and backhand play, 175, 178-9.  
 Forman, John, as lead, 93.  
 Forsythe, the brothers, Irish Bowlers, 61.  
 Fox, Charles James, fond of Bowls, 34.  
 Galashiels, Australians at, 69.  
 Gambling at Bowls, 21, 25.



- Game, law as to conditions of a, 227.
- Gemmell, A., Canadian skip, 84.
- Genoa, Bowls in, 108.
- George Canning B.C., the, 124.
- Gettre de pere*, 8.
- Gibson, Andrew, Belfast skip, 60.
- Gillett, Frank, his sketches of Provençal Bowlers, 110.
- Glasgow and Bowls, 39; its Clubs, 40; and a code of laws, 45; *versus* Ayrshire, 47.
- Gosson, Stephen, quoted, 12.
- Grace, W. G., founds first English B.A., 56; on the nationality of Bowlers, 89.
- Graham, Robert, Welsh Bowler, 63.
- Grant, James, quoted, 42.
- Gravel, its effect on the bowl, 135.
- Green: the ideal, 131; dimensions, 132; the ditch, 134; when to lay a new, 136; weeding, 137; mowing and rolling, 142; level *versus* crown, 145; the ranger or rota, 149; loan of, 150; effect of weather on, 175; after rain, 184; law as to objects on, 239.
- Green, the oldest, in the world, 6.
- Greenkeeper, *see* Groundman.
- Greens: Australian, 71; New Zealand, 72; Tasmanian, 72; Canadian, 76; *à la française*, 109, 110, 112; mystery of Kimberley green, 114; municipal, 115; "tricky," 143.
- Groundman, the, his essential qualifications, 147; in winter, 148; tipping, 149.
- Guaiacum officinale*, 155.
- Guarding, the question of, 199; in Points game, 210.
- Gulliver's Travels*, quoted, 32.
- Haddington, Bowls in, 39.
- Hamilton, Andrew H., Secretary of the Scottish B.A., 51.
- Hand, position in delivery, 183.
- Harvey, Tom, Scottish skip, 100.
- Hawick, Australians at, 69.
- Head, law as to result of, 239.
- Herne Hill B.C., 56, 124.
- Higginson, Colonel T. W., quoted, 35.
- Holland House, green at, 34.
- Hong Kong, Bowls in, 114.
- Hunt, Leigh, on Shakspeare, 16; on swearing, 164.
- Hunter, John C., his services to Bowls, 60; in Canada, 80; his last appearance for Ireland, 99.
- Imperial Bowling Association, founded, 55; amalgamated with the English B.A., 56.
- India, Bowls in, 114.
- International results, 1903-11, 103-4.
- Jack, the: Shakspeare's allusion to, 18; play to "baby," 67, 84; tossing for, 166; who should throw, 166; a minimum and maximum jack, 168; wide of median line, 169-70; an indolent custom, 172; random throwing, 173; names for, 173; effect of weak play to, 185; "live jack," 203-4; law as to size of, 227; and as to throwing, 232; and as to jack driven into ditch; and when "dead," 233; laws as to rebounding, 234; and burned, 234-5.
- Jactus lapidum*, 4.
- James I.'s "Declaration," 19.
- Jamieson, Andrew, Irish Bowler, 97, 101.
- Japan, Bowls in, 114.
- Johnson, Dr., quoted, 154.
- Johnson, William, as skip, 54.
- Jones, Rev. T. J., Welsh skip, 62, 100.
- Karachi, Bowls in, 114.

- Keenor, H. A., Welsh Bowler, 63.  
 Kemp, F. W., services to Bowls in Midlands, 54.  
 Kew Gardens, lawns at, 138 ; *lignum vite*, sections of, exhibited at, 155.  
 Kilmarnock, Bicket's green in, 44 ; Australians at, 69.  
 Kimberley [S.A.] green, mystery of, 114.  
 "Kitty," synonym for jack, 173.  
 Knights of the Southampton green, 7.  
 Knox, John, alleged play of, on Sunday, 20.  
 Kobe, Bowls in, 114.  
 Kumamoto, Bowls in, 114.
- Lamb, Charles, quoted, 35.  
 Lanham, Edward, on the quaint customs at Southampton, 7.  
 Laughton, Sir J. Knox, on Drake's match, 15.  
 Lawn-mower, use of, 142.  
 Laws, code of, Mitchell's, 46 ; revised by Scottish B.A., 51.  
 Laws of Bowls, 223-40.  
 Lead used to give bias, 153.  
 Leader, the duties of, 189.  
 Leicester, Bowls in, 54, 56 ; Australians at, 69.  
 Leslie, Daniel, on treatment of greens, 139, 140.  
 L'Estrange, Sir Nicholas, quoted, 20, 26.  
 Level-green game, the, 129-51.  
*Lignum vite*, 155.  
 Lilburn, F. W., his services to Bowls, 54.  
 Lindsay, William, Secretary of the Irish B.A., 61, 97, 101.  
 Lloyd, Edward, Secretary of the Welsh B.A., 63.  
 London, the cradle of Bowls, 4 ; revival of the game in, 53 ; the Lord Mayor's welcome, 99.  
 London County B.C., in record game, 119.
- London and Southern Counties B.A., 53, 122-3.  
 Love game, 124.  
 Lutton Place green, Edinburgh, 42, 134.
- MacDonald, Sam, as lead, 98.  
 Mackintosh B.C., Cardiff, 61.  
 Mackrill, T., in match at Reading, 121.  
 Macmillan, John A., of Dunbarton B.C., 95, 97.  
 Markers, law as to, 226.  
 Marylebone, greens at, 27.  
 Mat, placing of, 167 ; law as to position and size, 231.  
 McCready, Joe, Belfast skip, 60.  
 McIntyre, Alexander, of Dunfermline B.C., 96.  
 McKenzie, James, of Dunbar B.C., 96.  
 McLean, James, highwayman, 28.  
 McLetchie, William, Ireland's skip, 61, 98, 101.  
 McSally, Owen, Midland skip, 98.  
 Measurement of bowls, 200.  
 Melbourne, Bowls in, 65.  
 Metcalf, John, prowess of, 33.  
*Microcosmographie*, quoted, 22.  
 Midland Counties B.A., 53, 122.  
 Mitchell, William W., 44 ; his laws, 46 ; plays on Christmas Day, 1879, 130 ; quoted, 195, 202.  
 Montagu, Lady Mary Wortley, quoted, 27.  
 Montreal, Bowls in, 75, 78.  
 Montrose, Marquis of, quoted, 94.  
 Morgan, W. A., Welsh Bowler, 63.  
 Morrison, James T., Captain of British team in Canada in 1910, 85.  
 Muat, George, of South London B.C., 96.  
 Muir, Thomas, of Beith, as skip, 93.  
 Municipal greens, how to construct and maintain, 115-6 ; abuses of, 116-7.

- Murray, Charles, of Belmont B.C., Belfast, 96.
- Nairn, fishermen's annual match at, 43.
- Nationality, the question of, 88.
- Newcastle, Australians at, 69; Canadians at, 82.
- New English Dictionary*, quoted, 152-3.
- New South Wales B.A., 65, 72.
- Newton, Sir Isaac, visit of, to Trinity College green, 31.
- New Zealand, Bowls in, 72, 115.
- Nova Scotia, Bowls in, 74.
- Oldys, William, 15; quoted, 16.
- Oliver, H., of Falls B.C., Belfast, 97.
- Onlookers, law as to, 240.
- Ontario B.A., 75.
- Ormeau Park, Belfast, 61, 69.
- "Oxford Bowlers," song by Sir John Vanbrugh, 36.
- Paris, Bowls in, 107, 111.
- Peccadillo Hall Bowling green, 27.
- Penalties, statutory, against Bowls, 8, 9.
- Pepys, Samuel, quoted, 29.
- Perth, Australians at, 69; Canadians at, 82.
- Pickard, Ezra, his services to Bowls, 54, 86.
- Pin, or iron peg, 223.
- Playing out of turn, law as to, 229.
- Plymouth Hoe, Drake's match on, 14-6.
- Points, game of, 207; the four shots: Drawing, 208; Guarding, 210; Trailing, 212; Driving, 214.
- Pollock, J., of Ballynafeigh B.C., Belfast, 61, 97, 101.
- Pollock, John, of Cardiff B.C., 62, 94, 100.
- Pope, Alexander, quoted, 153.
- Port Elizabeth, Bowls in, 114.
- Pretsell, James, of Edinburgh, 50.
- Price, Ernest C., one of the founders of the London and Southern Counties B.A., 53; first Hon. Sec. to the Imperial B.A., 55; experiences in play, 121.
- Provence, Bowls in, 109.
- Prynne, William, quoted, 20.
- Putney, green at, 28.
- Quarles, Francis, his famous Emblem on Bowls, 24.
- Rae, Sir Alexander, on the greens of Wick, 141.
- Rampini, Sheriff, cited, 42.
- Ramsay, Allan, quoted, 41.
- Ramsay, John, Viscount Haddington, 27.
- Ranger of the green, 149.
- Reading, last match on old green at, 121.
- Recorde, Robert, quoted, 154.
- Rhodes, Hon. Cecil, 114.
- Richardson Trophy, the, 52.
- "Riding" bowls, 68.
- Rink, the: definitions of, 187; the Rink Game described, 187-205; law as to team of players, 228; and as to failure of, to appear, 229.
- Rinks of the green, law as to, 223; law as to possession of, 238.
- Robertson, Tom, of South London B.C., 89, 96.
- Robson, Dr. J. D., as skip, 98.
- Roller, weight of, 142.
- Ronuk, for dressing bowls, 159.
- Rose, John, Belfast skip, 60.
- Rosebery, Earl of, quoted, 3.
- "Rose of Normandy," Marylebone, green at, 27.
- Ross, D. A., record play, 119.
- Rota, green, 149.
- Rusk, Dr. J., of Belfast, 61, 101.

- Russell, Dr. James, Captain of the Canadian team of 1908, 81.
- School of Abuse*, quoted, 12.
- Score, law as to keeping, 239.
- Scotland's services to Bowls, 38, 64, 113; national game, 39.
- Scottish Bowling Association founded, 51; laws drafted by, 223-39.
- Scythe, use of, 142.
- Second player, the: his importance, 190; as scorer, 192.
- Selection, principle of, of team, 90, 92.
- Shakspeare, a keen Bowler, 16; his allusions, 17, 18.
- Shatford, Frank, as Bowler, 180.
- Shaw, Dr. W. A., quoted, 35.
- Shoes, rubber-soled, imperative, 150; white, a nuisance, 102.
- Shute, Richard, his match with Charles I., 21.
- Skip: the vain, 166; the director, 188; and the second player, 191; has powers of an autocrat, 194; but must be a diplomatist, 195; a tactician, 196; the ideal skip, 197; as driver, 197; firing, 198; what may be his last duty, 199; how to win and lose, 200; law as to duties of, 230.
- Smoke, Franklin, of Paris, Ontario, 82, 84.
- Snedden, George, brilliant game against David Barnett, 95; at Belfast 1910 Meeting, 97.
- Solway turf, 136.
- Somerville, John, of Whitevale B.C., Glasgow, 95.
- Southampton Town Bowling Club, oldest in the world, 6; curious customs at, 7.
- Spectator*, *The*, quoted, 32.
- Speir, Andrew, of Kilwinning, manager of the Ayrshire v. Glasgow matches, 48.
- Spenser, Edmund, cited, 13.
- Spittle, a mark of honour, 202.
- Spring Garden, incidents at the green at, 25-7.
- Statutes prohibiting Bowls, 8; repealed, 10.
- Stevenson, William, of Motherwell B.C., 98.
- Streatham Constitutional B.C., record match with London County Club, 119.
- Strong, Sir T. Vezey, Lord Mayor of London, 99.
- Strutt, Joseph, on reference to Bowls in ancient MSS., 6.
- Style, its attractiveness, 179.
- Suckling, Sir John, his gambling propensities, 21, 27.
- Suddaby, James, of Reading, 121.
- Sunday play, 19.
- Swift, Dean, quoted, 32.
- Sydney, Bowls in, 65.
- "Take Green!" 186.
- Tasmania, greens in, 72.
- Taylor, Lachlan, and the play of Breton peasants, 110.
- Taylor, Thomas, Bowling green Bowl-maker, Glasgow, 40.
- Telford, James, of Newcastle West End, 54; in Canada, 80; his dashing play, 93.
- Temper, Bowls a test of, 125.
- Teniers' picture of Bowlers, 112.
- Testing a bowl, law as to, 225.
- Third man, skip's deputy, 193; measurement taken by, 200.
- Thomas, D. Rice, Secretary of the London and Southern Counties B.A., 53, 123.
- Thomas, F. W., Welsh skip, 62.
- Thomson, George, of Dean B.C., Edinburgh, 96.
- Tie, a double, 123; law as to, 227.
- Toronto, Bowls in, 78; British Bowlers in, 80, 86.
- Torquay, Drake's Bowls at, 14.
- Tossing, law as to, for jack, 228.

- Touchers, 199 ; definition of, 201 ; law as to, 237.  
 Trailing in Points game, 212.  
 Turf, various points to be considered, 129-51.  
 Turner, M., of Carlisle Subscription B.C., 180.  
 Ulster, Bowls in, 59.  
 United States, the, Bowls in, 113.  
 Unwritten law, 146.  
 Valentines Park B.C., Ilford, 55, 56.  
 Vanbrugh, Sir John, his song of "The Oxford Bowlers," 36.  
 Victoria B.A., 65, 72.  
 Villefranche, Bowls at, 109.  
 Visualising the track of bowl, 175, 180.  
*Vox Populi, or Count Gondomar's Transactions*, quoted, 15.  
 Wallace-James, Dr. J. G., cited, 39.  
 Walpole, Horace, cited, 28.  
 Wedgwood, Josiah, at Bowls, 34.  
 Weeds, to eradicate, 138.  
 Weight of bowl, 159, 163.  
 Welsh B.A., 61.  
 West End green, Edinburgh, and its Fairy Ring, 42.  
 Western Ontario B.A., 75.  
 Weston-super-Mare, Canadians at, 79.  
 Whigham, J. H., of Brownswood B.C., London, 67.  
 "White," as synonym for jack, 101.  
 Whole-rink theory, the, 91.  
 Wick, Bowls in, 141.  
 Wigmore, A. S., as manager of Canadian team of 1904, 78.  
 Wilkinson, David, Welsh skip and lead, 62, 97, 98.  
 Willowbank Club, Glasgow, oldest in Scotland, 39.  
 "Win it and Wear it" [Southampton B.C. medal], 7.  
 Windrim, Samuel, of Shaftesbury B.C., Belfast, 61, 97, 101, 180.  
 Winter play at Bowls, 130.  
 Women Bowlers, 17, 30.  
 Wood, Charles, of Melbourne, President of the Victoria B.A., 55, 66 ; anecdote of his luck, 71.  
 Worms, their action, 140 ; an effective killer, 141.  
 Wright, W. H. K., on Drake's match, 15.  
 Yokohama, Bowls in, 114.  
 Young, Alderman John, of Sydney, President of the New South Wales B.A., 55, 66.  
 Young, Hugh, of Wattfield B.C., Ayr, 95.  
 Yule, Alexander, of Harriston, Ontario, 81.







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